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Inter-Arab Affairs

Al-Baz, Libyan Official on Arab League, Iraq

NC1507121391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0948 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 15 Jul (MENA)—Today Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid received Ahmad Qadhdhaf al-Damm, Libyan coordinator of Egyptian-Libyan relations, and Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Egyptian Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs.

Qadhdhaf al-Damm said afterward that he and Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid discussed how to follow up on the topics Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid raised with Libyan revolution Leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi when they met in Libya two days ago. He added that the current serious developments in the Arab region were also discussed.

He noted that the Arab League will quickly act on the Arab countries' level to respond to the current developments in the region. He refused to say whether Libya agreed to Iraq's request to hold an urgent meeting of the Arab League Council at the foreign minsters' level to discuss the American threats against Iraq.

Dr. al-Baz said that Egypt is closely following the current developments because it is aware of the seriousness of the situation. He added that Egypt hopes that events will not unfold in an undesirable direction.

He added that intensive inter-Arab contacts are continuing to discuss Iraq's request for an Arab League meeting, whether such a meeting would be useful, and the likelihood that Iraq will respond to the international resolutions.

Answering a question on the Syrian reply to the U.S. proposals regarding a peace conference, Dr. al-Baz said that the Syrian response was a successful and positive step toward facilitating the peace negotiations' start.

He expressed his belief that intensive efforts must be made in the coming stage to obtain a similar reply from Israel so that the negotiations can begin after a short time, during which the Arab side will have done all that is required of it. He said that it is Israel's turn to bear its responsibility toward the peace process. He added: We are awaiting the Israeli reply.

'Abd-al-Majid on Meeting With Al-Qadhdhafi

NC1407114291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1044 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 14 Jul (MENA)—Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, secretary general of the Arab League, said that he held comprehensive talks with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi concerning the current Arab situation. 'Abd-al-Majid said that Col. al-Qadhdhafi supports the Arab League and its efforts to heal the rift in the Arab world. This came in a statement 'Abd-al-Majid made today following his return from a two-day visit to the Libyan Jamahiriyah.

'Abd-al-Majid To Inspect Iraqi Nuclear Sites

NC1607113491 Cairo MENA in English 1115 GMT 16 July 91

[Text] Cairo, July 16 (MENA)—Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Arab League secretary general, today received Ambassador Nabil Najm, Iraq's permanent delegate to the Arab League. The ambassador said, following the meeting, that he delivered to Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid a message from the Iraqi foreign minister on his country's stance vis-a-vis the U.S. and the Western countries' threats to mount a strike against Iraq. In his message, the Iraqi minister proposed that Dr. 'Abd-al- Majid be entrusted with setting up an Arab committee to visit Iraq and get acquainted on the spot with all nuclear installations of peaceful purposes and also with facilities offered by Iraq to the UN inspection team.

Damascus Declaration Meeting Opens in Kuwait

Musa Arrives, Comments

NC1507192691 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] The Damascus Declaration's eight foreign ministers began their meeting in Kuwait today. After arriving in Kuwait this afternoon at the head of the Egyptian delegation to the meetings, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said that Egypt welcomes the meeting because it will provide an opportunity for various views on security arrangements in the Gulf region to be heard.

Musa said that Egypt will remain neutral on Iranian participation in these arrangements until the issue has been discussed seriously. We will consult all parties on any new developments, he added, pointing out that Iran is a neighboring country and a friend. Egypt would welcome any Iranian delegation visiting Egypt for consultations and talks, he said.

Musa noted that Egypt is confident that the Kuwaiti Government and people will ride out their current security and stability crisis. As a big sister, Egypt is prepared to assist when asked, he said, adding: We will work together to discuss all issues that concern the eight Damascus Declaration countries within the framework of Arab principles. We look to the future with optimism and confidence.

Arab Ministers Arrive

LD1507205191 London KUNA in Arabic 1805 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 15 July, KUNA—The Damascus Declaration foreign ministers arrived here today to take part in the meeting due to begin later tonight to discuss

the technical details concerning the principles of the declaration. [passage omitted]

The Damascus Declaration involves the six Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] member states, Egypt and Syria.

In a statement on arrival, Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' stressed the views of the Damascus Declaration states on a variety of issues. Mr. al-Shar' denied the existence of any essential disputes on the executive steps provided for by the Damascus Declaration, and he stressed that it is natural that some views should differ during debates and consultations. [passage omitted]

Concerning press reports on a meeting between Syria, Jordan and the PLO, the Syrian foreign minister said that the idea exists, but no agreement has been reached so far on realizing it.

For his part, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said that the meeting of the Damascus Declaration ministers will discuss all the issues of concern to the member countries within the framework of Arab cooperation and with an optimistic view of the future. [passage omitted] Regarding the role of Iran in the security measures in the Gulf region, Musa said that Iran is a neighbor and a sister state and consultations with it have been requested.

The GCC foreign ministers taking part in the meeting of the Damascus Declaration member countries stressed the importance of this meeting, which is taking place in the shadow of a highly critical situation related to the security and stability of the region. [passage omitted]

In reply to a question regarding his view about Iran's joining the Damascus Declaration, Rashid al-Nu'aymi, United Arab Emirates foreign minister, indicated that Iran's relationship with the countries of the region is a relation of dialogue and cooperation which is naturally different from the cooperation meant by the Damascus Declaration, whose members all belong to the Arab League. [passage omitted]

Kuwaiti Minister Opens Meeting

LD1507201291 London KUNA in Arabic 1804 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Kuwait, 15 July 1991, KUNA—Shaykh Salim al-Sabah, Kuwait deputy prime minister and foreign minister, called on the Damascus Declaration states to make all efforts to lay down the correct framework for joint Arab action through which work for entrenching the roots of security and stability in the region will be possible. In a speech opening the meeting of the Damascus Declaration states here tonight, Shaykh Salim added: "This meeting comes at a very delicate and complex stage amid challenges we cannot ignore—a matter which requires that we work with all efforts to lay down the correct frameworks for our joint Arab action." He stressed the importance "for us to provide our peoples with their legitimate right to life, away from sick and disappointed dreams which aim at destroying this legitimate right."

He pointed out that today's meeting, within the framework of the principles and aims contained in the Damascus Declaration, represents a move in the right direction as it is based on fundamental bases in joint Arab action, in the forefront of which are the Arab League charter and the treaty of Arab common defense and economic cooperation between the Arab League member states.

Shaykh Salim affirmed that "what we aim at through this move and in the framework of these principles and objectives is to strive to revive the ideal formula for joint Arab action, after all attempts had failed, and after such action became unable to fulfill the simplest requirements of security and stability for our peoples."

He emphasized that the Damascus Declaration "is in our view the ideal framework to fulfill the requirements of the new Arab order based on a commitment to respect territorial integrity and regional safety, equality in sovereignty, non-acquisition of land by force, non-interference in others' domestic affairs, commitment to the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, and serious efforts to realize balanced economic and social development. It is an order that accords with international trends toward laying down the basis of a new international order."

He further said: "This good grouping was not and will not be directed against anyone. It deals with an open heart and an open mind with all moves aimed at treating others on equally, it respect the supreme interests of the Arab nation, and it is committed to the principles of international legality."

Shaykh Salim accused the treacherous Iraqi regime of exposing the region to real danger by procrastinating in implementing the resolutions of international legitimacy, a matter which clearly confirms the continued aggressive intentions of this regime. He said that many of the sons of Kuwait are still suffering from the activities of the unjust Iraqi regime under harsh detention conditions and that many of their families and relatives are still experiencing the worst times of anticipation waiting for their return and waiting to learn their destiny.

Shaykh Salim also accused the Iraqi regime of continuing to deceive the international community about its remaining nuclear capabilites in order to achieve its ambitions and intentions. This calls upon us to remain cohesive and to continue to reject this regime. He called upon the international community to continue to reject and condemn the Iraqi regime and to do everything it can to compel it to adhere to international legitimacy.

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Shaykh Salim al-Sabah praised the efforts made by the United States to bring to an end the Arab-Israeli conflict and realize a just and lasting solution to the Palestinian issue on the basis of UN Security

Council Resolutions 242 and 338. He also welcomed the constructive steps made by the Lebanese Government to spread its legitimate authority to all the Lebanese territory in accordance with the al-Taif agreement.

After Shaykh Salim had concluded his opening address, the foreign ministers of the Damascus Declaration States held a closed working session.

Kuwaiti Amir Receives Ministers

LD1607105291 London KUNA in Arabic 0921 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Kuwait, 16 Jul (KUNA)—At 1000 this morning, His Highness Shaykh Jabir al-ahmad al-sabah, amir of Kuwait, received the foreign ministers of the Damascus declaration states—the United Arab Emirates, the State of Bahrain, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Sultanate of Oman, the State of Qatar, the Arab Republic of Egypt, and the State of Kuwait—on the occasion of the conference they are holding in Kuwait. During the meeting, views were exchanged on the current situation in the Arab Gulf region and ways of strengthening cooperation among these states in such a way as to guarantee stability, peace, and security. Shaykh Salim al-Sabah, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and Mr. 'Abdallah Ya'qub Bisharah, secretary general of the Gulf Cooperation Council, were present at the meeting.

Ministers To Ratify Declaration

LD1607124791 London KUNA in Arabic 1210 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Kuwait, 16 Jul (KUNA)—The Kuwaiti News Agency, KUNA, has learned that the foreign ministers of the eight states which signed the Damascus Declaration will today ratify all the clauses of the agreement announced after Kuwait was liberated from the claws of Iraqi occupation.

Sources close to the meeting have reported that the ministers who are still meeting behind closed doors "have discussed the details of the Damascus Declaration relating to political, economic, and security affairs." The sources informed KUNA that all the ministers are about to ratify the clauses of the Damascus Declaration on the second day of their meetings in Kuwait today. The sources also expressed their satisfaction "with the progress of the meeting which is taking place in a positive climate thanks to all the states which signed the Damascus Declaration."

The foreign ministers representing the states of the Damascus Declaration had earlier today held a meeting which lasted over two and a half hours and they are expected to meet again in a final session tonight.

PLO Envoy Discusses Relations With 'Abd-al-Majid

NC1507194291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1615 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo 15 Jul (MENA)—PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, met with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid today. Following the meeting, 'Abu-Mazin said that the PLO wants to coordinate its policies with Arab countries through the Arab League. He also pointed out that Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid is extremely enthusiastic about coordinating the stands of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and the PLO in their capacity as parties directly concerned with the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In a statement following the one-hour meeting, Abu-Mazin said the Arab League can play an important role in coordinating Arab policies on the Palestinian issue, and he described Egyptian-Palestinian relations as good and said they are quickly returning to normal. Jordanian-Palestinian relations are normal, he added, and coordination is comprehensive; the two sides agree on everything.

The PLO official said that Palestinian-Lebanese relations are good and normal and that Palestinian forces have withdrawn to the camps. The PLO has given the Palestinian weapons to the Lebanese Army as a gift, he said.

In response to journalists' questions, Abu-Mazin said that the Syrian reply to the U.S. proposals on the international peace conference is positive and extremely useful to the Arab ranks. He added that this shows the true Arab desire to establish peace and confirms the seriousness of the Arab stand toward the current peace initiative. The positive Syrian reply comes at a time when Israel's reply to the U.S. proposals has been disappointing.

Abu-Mazin said that Iraq has the right to request an emergency Arab League meeting at the foreign minister level, adding, however, that the actual convening of such a meeting depends on the Arab League states. The PLO official said that Egypt and the PLO are taking part in serious mediation efforts with Iraq to resolve the issue so a unified Arab stand can be adopted on the current regional situation.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Escapes Injury in 14 Jul Car Accident

NC1607125691 Paris AFP in English 1204 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Tunis, July 16 (AFP)—Palestine Liberation Organisation chief Yasir 'Arafat has "miraculously escaped unharmed" from a road accident on the Baghdad-Amman highway on Sunday, a reliable Palestinian source said here Tuesday. Mr. 'Arafat's car skidded and

may have overturned, probably because it was speeding, the source said. He was unable to be more specific.

The 62-year-old PLO chief "miraculously escaped unharmed" though some of the passengers in his car were slightly injured, the source said. Mr. 'Arafat was travelling from Baghdad to Amman, when the accident occurred. He was on his way home to PLO headquarters in Tunis, where he arrived on Monday night.

'Arafat Adviser Welcomes Syrian Response to Bush

NC1507162491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1245 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Tunis, 15 Jul (MENA)—Bassam Abu-Sharif, adviser to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat, has said that he welcomes Syria's response to U.S. President Bush's message and that the Arab stand on the U.S. proposals is positive and constructive. Abu-Sharif said that because of Egypt's Arab and international prestige, the nation and President Mubarak have very important roles in advancing the efforts to convene a Middle East peace conference.

In statements made to a MENA correspondent in Tunis today, Bassam Abu-Sharif said that President Hafiz al-Asad's response to President Bush's message unquestionably demonstrates a positive and constructive Arab position on President Bush's proposals.

Abu-Sharif also said that the PLO has officially stated its appreciation of President Bush's proposals to Congress in March, proposals based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and other resolutions on the Palestinian people's rights. He noted that the PLO has adopted stands that have facilitated the efforts by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker to convene a Middle East peace conference.

The PLO official said that Israel's rejection of PLO and Arab peace efforts and of President Bush's proposals has become the only impediment to the peace process. This makes it incumbent upon the Security Council and the United States to shoulder a special responsibility to safeguard international legitimacy and implement UN resolutions, he added.

Abu-Sharif praised the role Egypt and President Husni Mubarak have played in Palestinian affairs, saying: We believe that because of Egypt's Arab and international prestige, the nation and President Mubarak have very important roles in advancing the efforts to convene a Middle East peace conference. In addition, Egypt and its president have displayed a tenacious and principled stand in support of the Palestinian people's rights, foremost among which is their right to determine their own future and establish an independent state.

Bassam Abu-Sharif called for a summit among President Husni Mubarak, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, King Husayn of Jordan, and Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi. He said that the summit is needed in light of the positive Arab stand on peace and the intransigent Israeli position.

Bassam Abu-Sharif said he hopes that the U.S. Administration will make practical moves to implement UN resolutions on the Middle East and Palestinian people's rights. It is inconceivable, he added, for the international community, the UN Security Council, and the United States to accept the continuation of Israel's expansionist policy which aims to obtain land, peace, and destructive weapons.

In conclusion, Bassam Abu-Sharif urged Israelis and Jews worldwide to put an end to the Israeli Government's rejection of the hand of fellowship, a stand that is pushing the region toward new catastrophes.

'Arafat Meets Barzani, Sends Letter to Talabani

JN1507174191 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and PLO Executive Committee chairman, has met with Mas'ud Barzani, leader of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, in Baghdad. They reviewed the overall situation in the region. Brother president Abu-'Ammar was briefed by Barzani on the results of the current talks in Baghdad between the delegation of the Kurdish parties front and the competent government authorities.

Brother president Abu-'Ammar had been asked by the leaders of the Kurdish parties to exert his efforts to restore cohesion among all sides. Brother president Abu-'Ammar stressed the PLO's complete readiness to use all its efforts to make these talks successful and achieve an agreement that will bolster national unity in fraternal Iraq, end foreign interference in Iraq's domestic affairs, and preserve the historic Arab-Kurdish relationship.

A PLO delegation headed by PLO Executive Committee member 'Abdallah Hurani also held a meeting with Mas'ud Barzani the night before last in the presence of a delegation of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan.

Abu-'Ammar also sent a letter to Jalal Talabani, head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, urging him to exert every effort to make the talks taking place between the delegation of the Kurdish parties front and the government authorities in Baghdad a success in order to promote national unity in fraternal Iraq, to bolster and preserve the Arab-Kurdish brotherhood, and to prevent the hostile circles from exploiting the situation to implement their aggressive plans in the region. 'Azzam al-Ahmad, ambassador of the state of Palestine in Baghdad, conveyed President Abu-'Ammar's letter to Talabani yesterday morning.

'Arafat Interviewed on Peace, Arab Coordination

JN1507184791 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1715 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Tripoli today after making a stopover of several hours at Cairo Airport. He was en route from Amman, where he held talks with His Majesty King Husayn and Prime Minister Tahir al-Masri. In an interview with our political affairs correspondent Salim 'Ali Dhiyab, Mr. 'Arafat said his talks with His Majesty King Husayn addressed the means to restore Arab solidarity and tackle the challenges facing the Arab nation. He added:

[Begin recording] ['Arafat] His majesty and I discussed all aspects of the Palestinian issue as the central Arab question, especially at this time when there is talk about international initiatives, including U.S. moves to convene a peace conference on the Palestinian question and the Arab-Israeli dispute. We also spoke about the regional situation against the backdrop of my visit to Baghdad yesterday and Arab efforts to repair Arab solidarity and unity so that as an Arab nation we may be in a position to handle this new world order, which we do not want to be detrimental to the Arab nation or Arab security. We must be effective in this Arab [as heard] order.

[Dhiyab] How do you see the role of the PLO in recovering Arab solidarity, and is it playing a role between a number of Arab states and Iraq to restore Arab solidarity?

['Arafat] Without a doubt, we take pride in making such an effort. You know about our efforts combined with those of sincere Arabs, especially his majesty, to regain Arab solidarity. We made joint efforts to make the Arab League session held at the foreign ministerial level and the election of the new league secretary general, my brother Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, a success. There are also moves at every level, including those by the states surrounding the Israeli enemy, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and the PLO, so that together we may be able to stand up to what they want to impose on us.

[Dhiyab] Reports speak of a meeting grouping the four states within two to three weeks.

['Arafat] We would very much like this to happen. We want the meeting. We should not go divided to the peace conference—should it materialize. At least these five Arab parties must ensure a modicum of coordination.

[Dhiyab] Your Excellency the president, have you been informed of the outcome of Mr. Faysal al-Husayni's visit to the United States and his talks with U.S. officials?

['Arafat] Yes. I have briefed my brothers here on the details of the talks.

[Dhiyab] How would you characterize the results?

['Arafat] I still believe they fall short of our expectations of the United States.

[Dhiyab] Thank you, Your Excellency the president. [end recording]

Criticizes U.S. Peace Efforts

LD1507191391 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Brother leader Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine, stressed that his talks with His Majesty King Husayn yesterday complemented the continuing consultations between the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples within the framework of the higher Jordanian-Palestinian political committee. Brother Abu-'Ammar described in a press statement the U.S. endeavors for peace in the region as taking people for a ride with the aim of gaining time to appropriate the Palestinian land and sacred things and make them Jewish. Regarding the Palestinian representation in peace negotiations with Israel, the brother president reminded the United States of its agreement with the PLO about the form of Palestinian representation and the role of the PLO in appointing its delegation for negotiations. This agreement was reached by the two sides through the mediation of Swedish Foreign Minister Sten Andersson in Cairo in July 1990. He said that America knows what was agreed upon between us and them in Cairo last July.

This said, Brother President Abu-'Ammar warned the United States against committing another mistake by carrying out aggression against Iraq. He stressed that the intifadah is continuing, wave upon wave, until the Palestinian flag is raised over holy Jerusalem. He added that the assassinations of the leaderships of the intifadah by the Israeli security forces will never affect the march of the intifadah of the Palestinian people, which cannot be defeated.

PLO Member on New Political Orientations

LD1507195291 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Brother Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], PLO Executive Committee member, stressed yesterday in Cairo that Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and the PLO agreed to hold a four-man meeting to crystallize a joint Arab viewpoint prior to convening a peace conference on the Middle East. Brother Abu-Mazin added that Lebanon will not take part in this meeting because it has a special problem with Israel.

Brother Abu-Mazin met yesterday consecutively with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa, and President Husni Mubarak's political adviser, Usamah al-Baz. He said he and Egyptian officials discussed the peace process and the points of agreement and disagreements between the sides concerned in the Middle East and particularly the UN role in a possible peace conference. He recalled that a Palestinian delegation led by brother Abu-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi], head of the PLO Political Department, will visit Syria shortly and hold talks with Syrian officials, as well as with the leaders of the Palestinian factions in Damascus.

Today's meeting in Tunis aimed at preparations for convening a new session of the Palestine National Council. Brother Abu-Mazin stressed that the PLO does not intend to adopt new political orieniations and that the issue is entirely organizational. He said that some factions in the PLO present in Damascus refused to take part in the meeting despite the fact that they had initially agreed to do so.

'Amr Musa Confers With Visiting PLO Delegation

NC1407065191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0632 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 14 Jul (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met this morning with members of the Palestinian delegation currently visiting Cairo, which is led by PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu-Mazin). The latest developments in the Palestinian issue and the current initiatives to find a just and lasting peace for this issue were discussed at this meeting.

'Abd-al-Majid Meets Delegation

NC1507130091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1152 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 15 Jul (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid today met with a Palestinian delegation led by Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, PLO Executive Committee member. They discussed developments in the Arab region, the efforts being made to convene an international peace conference, and ways of clearing the Arab atmosphere. The Palestinian delegation included Hakam Bal'awi, alias Abu-Marwan, Fatah central committee member; Sa'id Kamal, Palestinian ambassador to Egypt; and Zuhdi al-Qidrah, Fatah representative in Cairo. The talks also dealt with ways of restoring Arab solidarity and promoting the Palestinian cause. The Palestinian delegation arrived in Cairo on 13 July for talks with Egyptian officials on the latest developments in the Palestinian issue. Their visit will last several days

PLO To Close Offices in Denmark, Norway

LD1607043391 Stockholm Sveriges Radio Network in Swedish 2000 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] The Palestinian Liberation Organization is to close its offices in Denmark and Norway at the end of the year due to economic problems caused by the war in Kuwait. The office in Stockholm will be kept open, and it will probably become the PLO's main office in the Nordic countries.

Algeria

Curfew Suspended as 'Tangible Improvement' Noted

LD150721991 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Communique issued by the "military authorities"]

[Text] The work aimed at maintaining order and at protecting property and individuals has led, thanks to the spirit of responsibility the citizens have shown, to a tangible improvement in the internal situation throughout the country. Due to these positive developments, and in an attempt to put an end to the constraints the citizens feel, the military authority responsible for administering the state of siege has decided to suspend the curfew—note the word suspend—imposed on the provinces of Algiers, Blida, Tipaza, Boumerdes, and el-Oued beginning at 0000 on 17 July. This new measure, aimed at ensuring a gradual return to normal life, which all citizens desire, must not be exploited by individuals or groups with ill intentions to violate security and cause unrest. For this reason, and as a preventive feature, security measures will be retained in the form of control posts. Therefore, citizens who travel within or outside their provinces of residence are advised to carry documents confirming their identities in expectation of control operations. Generally, the discipline and civil spirit of each individual are sufficient to guarantee a return to normal life which all citizens seek.

Five Opposition Parties Support Government

LD160710/1591 Paris Radio France International in French 1830 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] In Algeria, the curfew in effect since 5 June is due to be suspended next Wednesday. Ahmed Ghozali's government is receiving the support of five opposition parties. The other movements today appeared to be adopting flexible attitudes toward the government, without, however, giving it their blessing. We have further details from Anne Dousset in Algiers.

[Dousset] Mr. Ghozali's government has just received support from five opposition parties, including the Socialist Vanguard Party—the communist party—which had called for a boycott of the legislative elections which were due to take place on 27 June, and Dr. Saadi's Rally for Culture and Democracy. Those absent are Hocine Ait Ahmed's Socialist Forces' Front, which has not yet taken a position about its support, and Ahmed Ben Bella's Movement for Democracy in Algeria. In Kouba on Sunday, the latter also declared this government credible and asked that it be given the means to make policy, a surprising statement by a party which is said to be ready to form an objective alliance with the Islamic Salvation Front and a group of nationalists within the National Liberation Front less than a month ago.

It is not surprising that the Socialist Forces' Front is not in this coalition of support. Since the end of the general strike, this party has opted for a more explicit opposition line. Although it is not the only party to demand the lifting of the state of siege, it is expressing with increasing frequency its disagreement with the call of the military and the suppression of individual freedoms. Furthermore, the Algerian League for the Defense of Human Rights, whose links with Hocine Ait Ahmed's party are known, has just begun an in-depth investigation into the behavior of the security forces during the events and the arrests.

This mini-consensus having been established, the prime minister has yet to find the financial means for his policy.

Islamic Front Leader Madani in 'Good Health'

LD160720/0840 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] One of the sons of [Islamic Salvation Front leader] Abassi Madani said that he and his family visited his father and that the latter is staying in an individual room and is in good health. He also affirmed that his father is being well treated and has all his fundamental rights.

Egypt

Saddam Said To Answer Mubarak Through 'Arafat

LN160730/0834 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0600 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Mustafa Bakri report from Cairo]

[Text] Informed Egyptian sources in Cairo told our radio that Iraqi President Saddam Husayn has sent his reply to Egyptian President Husni Mubarak's message through Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat, who stopped at Cairo Airport at 0200 yesterday. The Iraqi reply to President Mubarak's message stressed that Iraq has provided all possible facilities to the UN commission in charge of inspecting the Iraqi nuclear installations. The Iraqi president expressed his country's readiness to receive an Egyptian or Arab commission that would carry out the task of inspecting nuclear installations, indicating that his country would provide this commission with all the facts and facilities that would enable it to carry out its mission appropriately. In his message to President Mubarak, the Iraqi president expressed his country's desire to bypass the crises that has afflicted inter-Arab relations, indicating that preserving pan-Arab security is the duty of all Arab parties and that the current foreign military threats against Iraq are targeting the essence of this security.

President Mubarak had earlier sent a message to the Iraqi president through the Palestinian president, in which he urged him to disclose all his nuclear weapons in order to avoid a foreign military strike.

Mubarak on Terrorism, Gulf Security, Other Issues

NC1607090591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0645 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 16 Jul (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has declared that the ball is now in Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's court following Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad's reply agreeing to the U.S. peace proposals.

In an interview with the London-based Arabic newspaper AL-HAYAH published here today by Egyptian papers, President Mubarak said that there will be no substantial changes in the Damascus Declaration, and that any changes that are made will be within strict limits. He added that if the countries that signed the Damascus Declaration agree on something (?specific), it will not be discussed at the Arab League so that the other countries would not have the opportunity to voice their objections.

Replying to a question on Iran's role in Gulf security, President Mubarak said that the Arab Gulf states are the ones to assess what kind of cooperation will exist with Iran. He added that security does not necessarily mean armies and military forces, but that the region could be protected through other forms of cooperation.

On relations with Sudan, President Mubarak said that the problem is not with Sudanese President al-Bashir, but involves his supporters, specifically Hasan al-Turabi, who is overtly playing a dangerous game and who should take into account the fact that his game is known. President Mubarak added that al-Turabi's tricks have extended as far as the Arab Maghreb countries and that al-Turabi wants to extend them to the al-Jihad organizations in Egypt as well. He said that al-Turabi believes he can spread his destructive principles to every part of the world and is now behind the reckless acts in Sudan and the other countries in the area.

President Mubarak stressed that the Egyptian authorities know who the sources of terrorism are and will confront this problem and all those who support it. He noted it was al-Turabi who pushed former Sudanese President Ja'far Numayri to pass laws which he called Islamic but which were not Islamic at all. He added that Islam is a religion of tolerance, love, and brotherhood and not one of violence, terrorism, or the use of armed forces. He stressed that terrorist groups have no place in Islam.

On Egyptian-Saudi relations, he said: We are closely cooperating with King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques. He described the cooperation between the two fraternal countries as excellent.

On relations with the other Arab countries, President Mubarak said: Jordan's King Husayn has telephoned me several times, and I took his calls, but this does not mean that we have changed our views, policy, or principles. We are not deviating from the main policy line we have established.

President Mubarak said in the interview that Egypt has worked from the beginning to ensure that the Palestinian issue is viewed as one of a people and a state and not one of refugees. He added that this issue has been described as the issue of lost opportunities, because the Arab side is now demanding what it rejected years ago. He added that Egypt is continuing its efforts to secure the Palestinians' rights.

President Mubarak stressed that he is seeking to improve relations between Libya on the one hand and the European countries and the United States on the other. He pointed out that he is trying to convince these countries that Colonel al-Qadhdhafi has abandoned many of the policies that had elicited criticism in the past.

President Mubarak said that the Arab Cooperation Council has not been dissolved but is now in a museum and exists only on paper. He added that, at the beginning, he had doubts about this council's goals, but continued Egypt's participation at King Husayn's insistence.

President Mubarak noted that he had sent 33 appeals, pieces of advice, and written and oral messages to Iraqi President Saddam Husayn calling on him to save Iraq from destruction and avoid another military blow. He added that it is difficult to deal with the Iraqi president.

Replying to a question on Egypt's role in supporting Lebanese legitimacy, President Mubarak said: We support Lebanese legitimacy in many ways.

Sidqi, Delegation Leave for Damascus Meetings

NC1607105091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0632 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 16 Jul (MENA)—Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi left for Damascus this morning at the head of a delegation to the second session of the joint higher Egyptian-Syrian committee meetings.

Dr. Sidqi has said that the Damascus meetings follow the first session of meetings the committee held in Cairo in December. He said that a number of agreements will be signed during these meetings, the most important of which will deal with trade exchange, dual taxation, and linking electrical facilities. He added that cooperation between the two countries is long-standing and covers the economic, commercial, educational, information, reconstruction, and mining fields.

The delegation accompanying Dr. Sidqi includes the ministers of electrity and energy, petroleum and mineral resources, industry, education, housing and reconstruction, finance, and People's Assembly and Consultative Council affairs.

Foreign Minister Musa Leaves for Kuwait Talks

NC1507124691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1218 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 15 Jul (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa left Cairo for Kuwait this afternoon to head Egypt's delegation to the Damascus Declaration countries' meetings, which are scheduled to begin today in the Kuwaiti capital.

Algerian Foreign Minister Arrives, Makes Statement

NC1307111191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1001 GMT 13 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 13 Jul (MENA)—Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Ibrahimi arrived in Cairo from Amman this morning on a two-day visit to Egypt as part of a tour of several Arab and European countries. In an arrival statement, he said that during his visit to Egypt he will meet with several government officials and certain Arab League officials to discuss common Arab issues.

On the situation in Algeria, he said that the domestic situation is positive and reassuring, and that the government is following the committees' work with interest and is eager to overcome all problems, particularly social and economic ones. He noted that the government currently is preparing for legislative elections. Ibrhami's tour began with London, Geneva, Beirut, Amman, then Cairo.

Confers With Foreign Minister

NC1307205991 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 13 Jul 91

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met with Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Ibrahimi this evening. After the meeting, Musa said that their talks dealt with issues that concern the Arab nation, particularly the current efforts to enhance the peace process, the establishment of pan-Arab security, and future inter-Arab cooperation. He said that the talks also touched on how to strengthen bilateral cooperation. He said that in the near future, close Egyptian-Algerian cooperation and a continuing dialogue that seeks to serve the general situation in North Africa and the Arab world and to place inter-Arab relations in their proper framework will be apparent.

Lakhdar Ibrahimi said that the situation in Algeria is now favorable. He said that the security situation is stable and that the government has resumed preparations to hold legislative elections. He added that the Islamic Salvation Front is a recognized party in Algeria but that some individuals in the party carried out illegal acts. He said that these people were dealt with just like any other citizen who breaks the law.

Received by Mubarak

NC1407095291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0945 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] Alexandria, 14 Jul (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received this morning Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Ibrahimi, who currently is visiting Egypt. Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa attended the meeting.

The Algerian foreign minister arrived in Cairo yesterday as part of his tour of several countries in the region.

On Talks With Mubarak

NC1407144291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1300 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] Alexandria, 14 Jul (MENA)—Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Ibrahimi said that he has conveyed a message to President Husni Mubarak from brother President Chadli Bendjedid. Ibrahimi said that President Mubarak instructed him on Egyptian-Algerian relations and that he and President Mubarak discussed the situation in the Arab world at this difficult stage, particularly following the Gulf war; the peace process; and the Palestinian issue. The Algerian minister said he hopes that his meeting with President Mubarak will serve to further Egyptian-Algerian relations in the interest of both peoples and the Arab nation.

Ibrahimi said the current Arab situation and the efforts being made to clear the Arab air are difficult issues, adding: We have just come through a crisis that is one of the most serious the region has ever witnessed. Emerging from this crisis and healing the wounds is not easy, he added, but we are hopeful that with patience and hard work we may be able to close Arab ranks to work for a better future.

Ibrahimi said that both Egypt and Algeria have a role in clearing the Arab air, stressing that both countries have a long history of cooperation and joint action to solve problems and bring brothers closer. He said he hopes that the two countries will continue their efforts along this path.

Departs

NC1407182191 Cairo MENA in English 1738 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, July 14 (MENA)—Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Ibrahimi left here for home this afternoon after a two-day visit during which he met with President Husni Mubarak.

In a pre-departure statement, Ibrahimi said he had the pleasure of meeting President Mubarak, describing the meeting as important and good.

He added that he also had talks with his Egyptian counterpart 'Amr Musa on bilateral relations and the resolution on the part of Egypt and Algeria to intensify

contacts to strengthen bilateral relations and contribute to the solution of the Arab problems, he said.

We agreed that the Egyptian-Algerian committee would meet as soon as possible, he added.

Ibrahimi also said that he met with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat Abd-al-Majid and discussed means to develop the role of the Arab League.

Mubarak Receives UN Middle East Envoy

NC1307110791 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1047 GMT 13 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 13 Jul (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak today received Edouard Brunner, personal envoy of the UN secretary general for Middle East affairs, who is currently visiting Cairo. Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa also attended the meeting.

Dr. Butrus Ghali, deputy prime minister for foreign relations, is scheduled to meet with Brunner tomorrow to discuss current efforts to advance the Middle East peace process.

UN Envoy Departs for Damascus

NC1407182691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1739 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Excerpt] Cairo, 14 Jul (MENA)—Edouard Brunner, personal envoy of the UN secretary general, left Cairo for Damascus this afternoon following a four-day official visit to Egypt as part of his tour of Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Syria, and Lebanon. Before his departure, Brunner said that he and President Mubarak reviewed Egypt's view of the Middle East peace process and ways to activate and advance the peace movement.

Brunner said that he met with Dr. Butrus Ghali, deputy prime minister for foreign liaison and minister of state for emigration and Egyptians' abroad affairs, and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa to discuss ways of promoting peaceful efforts to solve the Middle East problem. [passage omitted]

Support Expressed for Somali Reconciliation

NC1507141191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0906 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 15 Jul (MENA)—The Foreign Ministry's official spokesman has said that, out of its ('belief) in its role in supporting fraternal Somalia and preserving its unity and sovereignty, Egypt is following Somalia's national reconciliation efforts with great concern within the context of Egypt's full respect for the policy decided by all the Somali people's political factions for the country's future.

The spokesman emphasized that Egypt supports every effort to reach a comprehensive reconciliation in Somalia. He said that Egypt hopes that the Somali factions will agree on a political settlement which will achieve Somalia's regional unity and preserve its national independence at the Djibouti conference for Somali national reconciliation.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman issued a statement today saying that Egypt urges all countries interested in establishing security and peace in the Horn of Africa to work toward enabling the Somali people to mobilize all their human, financial, and economic resources to achieve the desired progress and to extend all the assistance necessary to contribute to the success of Somalia's national reconciliation efforts.

He noted that Egypt is prepared to do all it can to contribute to constructive national dialogue among all Somali factions.

Musa Meets Sudanese Rebel 'Political Adviser'

NC1307204691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1958 GMT 13 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 13 Jul (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa this evening met with Dr. Mansur Khalid, political adviser to John Garang, leader of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement [SPLM].

Following the meeting, Dr. Khalid said that Egypt has always sought peace in Sudan. He pointed out that the only way to stop the war between northern and southern Sudan is to resolve the issues at the base of the problem. He said that the parties concerned must agree on some common ground on which to base peace.

The SPLM official added that the issues at the core of the problem include democracy and the participation of the Sudanese people's various forces in deciding their own future and destiny. He said that decisions must also be made on issues which have already been agreed upon between the SPLM and other Sudanese political forces. He mentioned, for example, the initiative promoted by Garang and 'Uthman al-Mirghani of the National Unionist Party.

Dr. Mansur Khalid explained that by their very nature, these agreements forbid any single group from monopolizing decisions on Sudan's future.

He also pointed out that the SPLM is not going to set any conditions for a meeting but that any meeting must have an agenda that has been prepared by a common agreement.

Foreign Minister Meets Visiting Belgian Official

NC1407192191 Cairo MENA in English 1823 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, July 14 (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa tonight met with visiting Anne-Marie Lizin, Belgian secretary for Unified Europe 1992.

The meeting reviewed efforts to move forward the Middle East peace efforts and the European role in this respect.

Following the meeting Lizin said that Europe supported U.S. efforts in this regard.

She, further, pointed out that Europe had no aspirations to exercise hegemony on any part of the world, and that the European role was to assist with implementing economic development projects and not military interference.

Belgian Departs

NC1507101091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0807 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 15 Jul (MENA)—Anne-Marie Lizin, Belgian secretary of state for Europe 1992, left Cairo this morning to return home following a three-day visit during which she was received by President Husni Mubarak.

In a predeparture statement, she said that Middle East developments, the peace efforts, Europe's role, and bilateral cooperation were discussed during her meeting with President Mubarak.

She added that she also met with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, and Dr. Butrus Ghali, deputy prime minister for foreign relations.

Interior Minister Returns From Tunis Talks

NC1307063491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2137 GMT 12 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 12 Jul (MENA)—Interior Minister Major General Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa returned tonight from Tunis following a four-day visit to Tunisia.

In an arrival statement, Maj. Gen. Musa said he is carrying a message to President Muhammad Husni Mubarak from his Tunisian counterpart, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. The interior minister said that he invited Abdallah Kallel, his Tunisian counterpart, to visit Egypt. Minister Musa said that his talks in Tunisia covered the entire range of cooperation between the two countries in security areas.

Minister Musa said that Tunisia asked Egypt to supply it with expertise in the security field. The two countries also coordinated their policies on information sharing, smuggling operations, international terrorism, and extremism. The minister noted that Arab interior ministers will hold a meeting in Tunisia this December.

Brigadier General Rida' 'Abd-al-'Azizi, Cairo airport's security chief, and a number of senior police commanders welcomed the interior minister at the airport.

Swazi Minister Arrives for African Regional Conference

NC1407191491 Cairo MENA in English 1814 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, July 14 (MENA)—Swaziland's minister of natural resources, land utilization and energy, Nqaba Prine Dlamini, arrived here this evening on a week-long visit to Egypt during which he will take part in the African regional conference on the African programme for development and environment, currently held here.

The conference discusses the African food crisis, resulting from drought in Africa, means of combating desertification and the optimum exploitation of water resources in Africa.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Addresses Justice Committee

LD1407155291 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 13 Jul 91

[Address by Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi at a meeting with the General People's Committee for Justice "during the past two days," with interjections by unidentified committee members; place not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted: Al-Qadhdhafi and committee members discuss the issue of land registration]

[Al-Qadhdhafi] If you have anything to say, please do.

[Unidentified member] After the law on liberties was approved [words indistinct], after the amendment of all the laws, which are in line with the Greater Green Human Rights Document, was approved, and after all these measures were approved, committees were set up by the General People's Committee for Justice to change all these laws in accordance with this document. We in the Jamahiriyah can say that if we apply this document with its legal and philosophical concept, we will be ahead of many developed states which claim to be developed. Any measure taken in the Jamahiriyah from that date will be the highest achievement made by civilized man. [passage omitted]

Naturally, much work needs to be done, and we would like to change all the laws; the laws are complex and not easy, leader, and we try to abrogate them in one year, because as far as we can see the Basic People's Congresses agreed that the operation should end within one year. Naturally, we already have (?the necessary) committees, but we might need to appoint some people and give them all possible means with a view to presenting the laws in their final form to the Basic People's Congresses. To be more precise, incarceration will be an exception, apart from the situation stipulated by the law, and the deterrent penalties will have a narrower scope.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] Can you be more precise? What are people's complaints about justice? What are the people complaining about?

[Unidentified member] The people are still complaining, leader, because the truth is that the security we would like to guarantee for the people has not been achieved. We have not managed to guarantee the security needed by the citizen. Security is needed. When we looked at all

the previous laws we did not find any deficiency in the legal regulations or in the instructions. The shortcoming was in the way the people applied these laws, and in their control, which, I must say, leader, stopped completely.

I do not want to annoy you with these issues, which are our main preoccupation, but despite all this we are still failing to accomplish our work. Like others, we in the General People's Committee are unable to do our work; we only want some specific means, and we would like to see everybody taking this position: Security should be a goal, an objective, and a basis.

[Al-Qadhdhafi] (?What else are the people complaining about?)

[Same unidentified member] We have drugs, leader. As regards the subject of drugs, naturally you know that an extremely virulent campaign is being launched against us. I could give you figures on the people arrested with huge quantities in their possession. Sometimes we seize in one crime, one case, about 100 quintals of hashish. This leads us to think that the people financing this are no ordinary people, leader; this is financed by states, and it is planned. Therefore, I mean that the fight against drugs or the measures should match the means—in other words, the means made available should match the type of crime facing us. This needs money, means, and people, and also quality—which should be created—and training. There is absolutely no shortcoming in the legislation and the laws since the advent of the revolution. In fact, we found a huge amount of excellent provisions [passage indistinct].

[Al-Qadhdhafi] [passage indistinct] Those who engage in secret work or violence; this is outside the law, and they cannot be dealt with within the law. They adopted illegal means. The means they practice specify the way they are treated. [passage omitted]

No one can impose his wish on us. The people either accept or reject—this applies to everything. For example, in Algeria there is a party that began to impose its belief. The Algerian people said: No, no one is my guardian, to impose his belief on me. Someone comes and says women have to wear veils. This is a decision he has uttered, but it is up to the woman to decide whether or not to wear a veil. If you possess the means to impose the veil, it would be tantamount to colonization, enslavement, and injustice, and it would be resisted. This cannot be regarded as democracy, law, progress, or civilization. [passage omitted: attack on nonbelievers and their attempts to impose their beliefs] This is a heresy, and out of eagerness for the Islamic religion, these humbugs, who come from India and Afghanistan, and are financed by America and Israel with the aim to sabotage the Arab homeland, must not spread. [passage omitted]

The people have become the government. Thus, corruption, which was confined to the government, has spread to the level of the people. Thus, you can find corruption anywhere in Libya, because the people are the ones who now rule. It is found from the neighborhood to the congress of the branch, to the congress of the municipality, to the people's committees, to those in establishments, companies and people's departments. All these [words indistinct] employees. [passage omitted: people must report cases of corruption]

[Unidentified member] Brother leader, it is known that with regard to these cases—if we review, for instance, the statistics of cases involving the misuse of one's position—the number of cases which have been presented for investigation up to now—some of them have been investigated and in some cases investigation has not been completed—is 175. This is with regard to misuse of position. As for nepotism and favoritism there are about 120 cases. As for illegal acquisition of property, there are four cases under investigation. Among the most difficult matters is this issue, because reports are rare. [passage omitted]

[Al-Qadhdhafi] [passage omitted on means of combating corruption; work of committees entrusted with fight against corruption; work of committees entrusted with fight against corruption among civil servants; shortcomings in the anticorruption legislation] We are not hunting people down. What is involved here is a public office: You are serving the people and you are holding a public office. Therefore, the people should know about your integrity and that you are qualified to hold such a post. Here we are not faced with a situation whereby someone is in his house when he hears a knock on his door to be asked questions about his personal wealth. If you do not want public office, fair enough—say so and be a farmer, a shephard, or a poultry grower. You are free to do so. Once you agree to hold public office, however, you also accept our conditions; we can always investigate you to ascertain whether you are doing a good job or not. You are being paid a salary, and if at the same time you accept bribes for your services, why receive a salary? [passage omitted]

If someone kills someone with a Kalashnikov, you should ask him for his authorization to own such a weapon. I would like to ask you here: When you are trying a murderer, do you question him, try him, and punish him for the possession of arms, or do you simply try him on the charge of willful murder or manslaugher, and so forth? [passage indistinct] It is our desire that when someone kills someone else with a Kalashnikov, he should be quizzed as to where he obtained the Kalashnikov, who gave it to him, and how he got the ammunition. Did he use a handgun to commit his murder? Your should ask him how he got the handgun. These matters have weakened security, a weakness which is being felt by citizens. [passage omitted]

Security is security. No mercy should be shown, and no relatives should interfere. [passage omitted] There are responsibilities in public service. You could be transferred to any area of the country. If you think you cannot work away from your family, then you are welcome to stay with your family. Public service is public service,

and you are supposed to be at the service of Libya wherever it is requested. Well, begin implementation of the laws, either at the People's Court of the judiciary, and spread them. Whoever is involved in a scandal, expose him on the radio and let him bear the consequences of his deed. Then people will learn.

As for the subject of atheism [zandaqah], we said that it was [word indistinct], it cannot be (?debated). These people are outlaws. [passage indistinct]. The Muslim Brotherhood keeps saying: Resist, resist, resist. Resist the police when necessary. So, from the start, you cannot discuss with him, or ask him to give a statement, because the question is: Who is going to kill the other first. This is a rabid dog whose question is settled. We cannot allow the sabotage of the Islamic religion by trivialities coming from India. No way. These people are going to eliminate themselves, like moths; they move around fire until they get burned. So, let them listen and make up their minds.

Fine, let us end this meeting.

Sudan

Al-Bashir Discusses Egyptian Ties, Other Issues

NC1507114491 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic
9 Jul 91 pp 3, 9

[Report on interview with Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, prime minister and chairman of the Revolution Command Council for National Salvation, by 'Adil Husayn, conducted by Husayn and AL-AHALI reporter Muhammad 'Awdah, in Khartoum "a few days ago;" questions not attributed]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] The Sudanese prime minister opened the interview by criticizing certain reports about his country published in Egypt's official press. He said that these reports were part of a campaign to distort reality and put Sudan in a bad light internationally.

He said: In this connection, I would like to praise AL-SHA'B's fair and accurate reporting. As for AL-AHALI (which was represented at the meeting by Muhammad 'Awdah), it has occasionally published things that are against us, but, unlike certain newspapers, it does not impose a complete blackout on the views of the other side. I would like to stress that we in Sudan value everything Egypt has done to bolster bilateral relations. We do not want our term of office to be marked by estrangement or tension with the northern part of the Nile Valley. The Sudanese nationalist movement grew and prospered in Egypt. Egypt opened its doors to us; it opened its schools and universities. The places reserved for our young people at these institutions meant that there were fewer opportunities for Egyptian students. We have not forgetten this or other gestures. The Sudanese love their Egyptian brothers wholeheartedly. The Unionist Party had a sweeping victory in the 1954 elections because its program was based on union with Egypt. God created us as complementary units, and we believe that Egypt is Sudan's strategic rear area just as Sudan is Egypt's. This became evident in 1967 when the Egptian Air Force and the military academy were transferred to Sudan. As long as Israel maintains its hostile intentions, Sudan will do its part to support Egyptian security.

[Question] How then does the brother prime minister explain the continued tension between the two countries, both before and since the revolution of national salvation? How can you explain the mounting tension, which recently reached crisis level?

[Al-Bashir] I will confine my comments to what happened after the revolution. I can say that disputes did indeed arise between the leaders of the two countries. Disagreement, however, is natural and differences of views over any issue (the Gulf or any other issue) must not be at the expense of ties between the two countries. A husband and wife can disagree. Brothers disagree. When there is disagreement, we must discuss matters calmly, so that it becomes clear that the issues on which we agree are more important. We must always remember that there are foreign forces seeking to divide us.

[Question] In light of what you just said, does Sudan have any initiatives to contain the crisis?

[Al-Bashir] We are trying to do this by all possible means. Most of our ministers visited Cairo recently, and their visits were not restricted to discussions of technical matters. Every official is instructed to discuss ways of normalizing bilateral ties with the Egyptian brothers. We want to revive the integration agreements, the first of which was signed in Numayri's time. We want the joint defense pact, now frozen, be revived. When we selected brother 'Izz-al-Din Hamid as our ambassador to Cairo, this was not a random choice. He is well known in Egypt, where he lived when he was the Sudanese official in charge of the integration agreements.

I also want to note that we took advantage of the opportunity provided by the good relations between Egypt and the Libyan Jamahiriyah to ask brother al-Qadhdhafi to use his good offices in this regard. We hope he succeeds.

Furthermore, we have not made any protests or done anything else in connection with the presence of Sudanese opposition figures in Cairo, although they publicly announce, night and day, that they are planning a coup to change the government here by force. The fact that Unionists have sought refuge in Cairo is only natural and there are many precedents for it. The opposition figures currently residing in Cairo are not all Unionists, however. All types of opposition figures (even Garang) are using Cairo as their headquarters. Despite the seriousness of this issue, we are not raising it publicly, because we do not want to do anything that could be exploited by those who oppose warm relations between Egypt and Sudan.

We will continue our sincere efforts, God willing, but if the crisis is to be overcome, Egypt must make reciprocal positive moves. We fear, however, that some people may have decided to sever ties with Sudan. Indeed, it appears that someone is transferring the dispute between the two governments to the streets, which is very dangerous. We have not done so, as we treat Egyptians and Sudanese exactly the same. The Sudanese citizen now feels, however, that the dispute between the two governments has affected the way he is treated by Egyptian authorities. Mistreatment and the accompanying bitterness spoil the traditional ties between our two peoples, ties which must be very important to us and which remain unaffected by any disagreement between governments. Love and compassion among the sons of the two peoples are the pillars on which we will build unity between the two countries, God willing.

Is it logical that the Egyptian authorities should return hundreds of Sudanese arriving at the High Dam or Cairo airport? What crime have they committed? Some were going to Egypt to visit relatives, receive medical treatment, pursue their studies, or conduct business. Others spent all their savings and took out loans so they could travel. Why should disputes between governments bring things to a standstill at the popular level? Why were these humble citizens not told that they would not be welcome in Cairo before they embarked on their long journey?

[Question] It is difficult to justify such behavior, but surely the Egyptian authorities must have given you some explanation. How did they explain their decision to ban the entry of Sudanese citizens and the mistreatment they received at airports and ports?

[Al-Bashir] They said this was done for reasons of security, although there is no proof that Sudan is now or has ever been a threat to Egypt and its government.

[Question] Even if there were valid security concerns, the measures adopted are applied to everyone without distinction. As the security issue has been raised, will you please comment on the claims that Sudanese territory is being used to provide military training camps and bases to Islamic organizations that advocate the use of force against the Egyptian political regime. Also, how true are the reports that [Egyptian Islamic leader] Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman has taken refuge in Sudan?

[Al-Bashir] I first heard about Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman's arrival in Sudan on Radio Monte Carlo, which cited a security source in Cairo. I had heard nothing about him before; I had never even heard his name and knew nothing of his alleged role in the al-Jihad organization. When I asked about the truth of this report, I learned that he had indeed entered Sudan through Khartoum's airport. It seems that he was originally planning to go to Saudi Arabia to perform the minor pilgrimage, but Cairo airport authorities told him that his visa for Saudi Arabia had expired and that he could not travel to his original destination, so they put him on a plane to Sudan—the airport authorities put him on this plane. When he arrived here, he completed the necessary formalities like other Egyptian citizens, who do not need visas. From the airport, he first went to the al-Jami'ah Mosque and then to a friend's home, where he stayed until he left for the United States. He did not engage in any activity during the few days he spent in Sudan.

The fact that Shaykh 'Umar is blind, as you know, confirms the truth of this version of events. He would not be able to fool authorities at an airport which has the tight security Cairo airport does. Furthermore, AKHIR SA'AH magazine has published remarks attributed to a security official in Asyut, who acknowledged that he advised Dr. 'Umar to go to Sudan to protect himself, because there were sharp divisions within the al-Jihad Organization at the time and the shaykh was in danger of being killed by members of an opposing faction. This is what the security official said in AKHIR SA'AH.

[Question] What about the training camps?

[Al-Bashir] The Egyptian security organs know whenever an Egyptian arrives in Sudan. We have informed all concerned parties that all training camps in Sudan are open for their inspection. In view of our fraternal relations, we have nothing to hide and we are prepared to allow anyone who wishes to inspect them to do so whenever he chooses.

[Question] What about the reports about the missiles that threatened the High Dam?

[Al-Bashir] Really, I do not know where or how that story originated. I also do not know why some people spread that story in Egypt as if they believed it to be true.

(Remark [by Husayn]: A prominent Arab diplomatic source told me that Moroccan intelligence was not the source of this lie, and that this strange story originated in Cairo.)

Al-Bashir said: Let us discuss the matter. Until shortly before 2 August (i.e. shortly before Iraq's occupation of Kuwait), who was Iraq's ally? Was it Sudan or was it Egypt which was the ally by virtue of its membership in the Arab Cooperation Council? We were not friends with Iraq before 2 August, and we made no attempt to hide the well-known reasons for our dispute in our dealings with it. This means that the Iraqi missiles supposedly targeted against the High Dam could not have arrived before 2 August. After 2 August, Iraq was blockaded, which meant it could not have sent any missiles to us. How and when, then, did the missiles and planes arrive? Also, how can anyone think we would do such a terrible thing? Sudan would never do anything like this. The great economic project of the High Dam is as important to Sudan as it is to Egypt. Why would we want to harm ourselves?

Lieutenant General 'Umar Al-Bashir went on to say: Let us put all this aside. I told brother Husni Mubarak frankly that Sudan is of vital strategic importance to the

Arab nation. There are other countries that possess abundant material resources, especially petroleum, but our Arab world can secure its food only from Sudan. We have the most fertile and extensive land and we can provide the Arab world with wheat, rice, corn, and oils. There is a hostile scheme to separate Sudan from its Arab nation, so as to deprive the nation of its food source. Regrettably, the Arab brothers seem to be ignoring this scheme and do not oppose it with a counter scheme.

Sudan welcomes all Arab efforts to cultivate its land. All our investment laws have been devised to entice and encourage... In the case of Egypt in particular, we welcome joint projects and the regulation of immigration on the largest possible scale. Sudan can not only provide food security for Egypt, but also absorb the excess population of which you complain. The Egyptians' experience and robustness in the field of agriculture is well known. Sudan has room for millions of qualified young people. We wish we could devote our attention to this matter, instead of squandering our resources in meaningless disputes. In this way, we could realize great benefits for our people in the north and the south.

[Question] This brings us to the issue of Sudanese-Libyan integration. Are you satisfied with what has been done in this regard so far?

[Al-Bashir] Matters are proceeding favorably. Agreements have been reached on questions of law, passports, visas, and property ownership, and this will have an impact. Farmer and student associations now have unified leaderships. Our recent talks with brother al-Qadhdhafi further deepened this understanding and cooperation. We must remember, however, that our objective is nothing less than total union. We hope that Egypt will be at the heart of this process. In fact there is no way the Arab-Islamic nation can extricate itself from its present situation without seeking unity.

[Question] Does not your Islamic policy cause problems with the Libyan leadership, which advocates pan-Arabism? Would such a difference (if it materialized) obstruct union?

[Al-Bashir] There are no differences. We believe that Arabdom without Islam is a body without soul. We believe that it was Islam that created a common language and uniform traditions in this region. Arabdom without Islam is an empty call based on ethnicity. Pan-Arabism, as the beating heart of the Islamic nation, is the call which can establish firm unity and a civilized message. We see no contradiction between what we believe and what the Libyan Jamahiriyah advocates.

[Question] What about the issue of non-Muslims in the Arab world? How do you view their relationship with the Islamic state you seek to establish?

[Al-Bashir] As everyone knows, throughout our long history, non-Muslims have lived in Islamic states and enjoyed the same rights and obligations as the rest of us. Our land's Islamic heritage is the heritage of all. They will, as good citizens, contribute to our future progress, God willing. I hope that non-Muslims (Christians and others) will not be affected by the enemies' tendentious propaganda.

[Question] Brother President, this brings us to the issue of southern Sudan. Have the people in the south been persuaded by your arguments?

[Al-Bashir] The political and legal formulas we have proposed have been welcomed by many. We have established a federal system of government, satisfying a demand they have been making since 1947. Until the revolution of national salvation, the governments that came to power after independence had ignored this demand. We adopted federalism and implemented it in all Sudanese regions, not just the south. Under this federal system, the southern provinces have the right to decline to apply some of the laws passed by the north. This is specifically stated in our criminal code, which deals with issues concerning religious prohibitions.

Non-Muslims have the right to reject anything that violates their religion and beliefs. Muslims also have the right to implement the provisions of their sharia. Is this not just and logical? This situation has now become clear and it is acceptable to the majority of southerners.

[Question] We realize that the sharia issue was a mere pretext for rebellion and that the conflict and plotting had begun before Numayri implemented shari'ah. We also know that the salvation revolution's positive political initiatives have not succeeded in ending the war, particularly in light of the colonialist and Zionist forces' determination that you continue squandering your resources. What is the situation now?

[Al-Bashir] The war is continuing. You in Egypt know what war and the squandering of resources mean. We are convinced that the leaders of the rebellion will only stop fighting when they realize that they have no hope of imposing their will by force. I believe that the collapse of the Mengistu regime, which gave the rebels all forms of support, have placed them in a critical position. Several parties have interceded to help bring about a truce and prepare for negotiations. We have held contacts with Nigeria for this purpose, and we hope that these sincere efforts will bear fruit. Nevertheless, we will remain on our guard and prepared to fight.

[Question] Mr. President, during our visit here we attended the celebration of your revolution's second anniversary. We share your optimism about the possibility of ending the rebellion and restoring unity and peace to Sudan. How much confidence can you have, though, that stability will return when the plots around you are increasing?

[Al-Bashir] Thank God, we are Muslims. After every prayer we say: "O God! Lord of power (and rule), Thou givest power to whom Thou pleasest, and Thou strippest off power from whom Thou pleasest: Thou enduest with

honor whom Thou pleasest, and Thou bringest low whom Thou pleasest: In Thy hand is all Good. Verily, over all things Thou hast power." [Koranic verse]

This means we pursue the course that achieves stability and then accept God's judgment. Human beings may act on the basis of certain calculations, but ultimately they cannot control events. Many people thought that our regime would collapse while Mengistu's would remain, but as you know the opposite happened. We feel the enmity and siege around us; we know we face the challenges of the south and of desertification and famine. We accept our plight with patience and fortitude. The Koran says: "Be sure we shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those Who patiently persevere, Who say, when afflicted With calamity: To God We belong, and to Him is our return." [Koranic verse]

We are patient and will continue to struggle. The early Muslims went barefoot, but they defeated great empires. The salvation revolution has made great strides in the last two years. We believe that the enormous sacrifices our people made for the sake of reforms have only strengthened their support for us. We know from past experience that popular discontent with political regimes was largely the product of anger among the youth. I can say that the salvation revolution rule is the first Sudanese Government to enjoy overwhelming support from students and youths, and I thank God for this.

Tunisia

Ben Ali Views Postwar Climate, Fundamentalism

PM1207113691 Paris LE MONDE in French 12 Jul 91 pp 1,4

[Interview with President Ben Ali by Michel Deure and Jean-Pierre Langellier in Tunis; date not given]

[Text] Tunis—[LE MONDE] What do you expect from Mr. Mitterrand's visit?

[Ben Ali] Tunisia appreciates the fact that President Mitterrand has chosen it for his first visit to an Arab country since the Gulf war. I attach great importance to an exchange of views with a man who is both a witness to and a protagonist in the great events of this world. There is no agenda for this visit. We will talk about everything. Three French ministers—Roland Dumas, Pierre Beregovoy, and Jean-Louis Bianco—will meet with their Tunisian counterparts.

We will ask the president to make some effort to help Tunisia's development in the framework of our partnership. For instance, we have asked the French authorities to allow us greater flexibility in the use of the economic and financial aid which they grant us. The important thing is to create jobs in Tunisia. Almost 300,000 Tunisians are living in France. If France helps us to create jobs in our country, we will be able to bring them back more easily. The more jobs there are, the more the Tunisians will stay at home.

[LE MONDE] How would you like to see Franco-Tunisian cooperation developing?

[Ben Ali] France is our main partner. One fourth of our trade is with France.

We share with President Mitterrand the same desire to further strengthen our relations in all spheres. For instance, French investment is developing rapidly. At present, 300 enterprises with entirely French capital, or in association with Tunisians, are operating in our country in priority sectors essentially directed toward export. The credit allocated to partnership has encouraged the emergence of new joint projects. We want to see this approach strengthened and based more on joint development and the recycling of the debt. We also want the creation of a bank for the Maghreb similar to the European Reconstruction and Development Bank created for the benefit of Eastern Europe.

The first meetings of the countries in the Western Mediterranean were held at France's initiative. This forum is moving toward institutionalization following the five-plus-four meeting in Rome (Footnote) (The five Maghreb countries—Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Libya, Mauritania—and France, Italy, Spain and Portugal) at ministerial level in October 1990. It consolidates Euro-Maghreb dialogue. We must now prepare for the five-plus-four summit. Tunisia would be happy to host it. Contacts have been established to that end and positive responses have been registered. In principle, this summit should take place before the end of December.

[LE MONDE] An Islamic plot was discovered in Tunisia last May. What was the precise scale of the infiltration in the Army, the national guard, and the police?

[Ben Ali] Not being a democratic movement, the Islamic movement known as the Renaissance Party is trying to seize power by all possible means. That is why it regards attempts to infiltrate state institutions as a method. Our army is a sound body, imbued with republican principles. Attempts to infiltrate it have remained limited to fanatical elements from two sets of officers who were taught by an Islamic leadership member.

The teacher in questions is Sadok Chourou, who succeeded Rached Ghannouchi in spring 1989 when the latter chose voluntary exile. He was a part-time teacher at the Fondouk-Jedid military academy. Those young officers arrived there already indoctrinated. Of 100 officers questioned after that plot, 34 young officers are still implicated.

[LE MONDE] Some people saw that plot as something which was "staged" to justify repression against the terrorists.

[Ben Ali] There was a plot. There was no staging or confusion. The case has been referred to the legal authorities. They will give their verdict in complete serenity and independence. We still have evidence of that plot every day. In the past few weeks we have discovered stocks of Molotov cocktails, bottles of concentrated sulphuric acid, and just last Monday, a 200-watt radio station in the vicinity of Tunis. It had just been installed and did not yet have an aerial. Its users probably planned to jam French and Arabic radio and television broadcasts, and also to broadcast their own messages.

[LE MONDE] When will the trial of these plotters take place and before what court?

[Ben Ali] As members of the military were involved in this affair, the trial will be held after the usual procedure before a military court, in accordance with our country's legislation. It will be public and the defense will have all the necessary legal guarantees.

[LE MONDE] Three years ago, you told us: "I am opposed to the death sentence." Do you stand by that statement in light of the fact that a diplomat was sentenced to death for high treason in December and five Islamic movement members recently had the same sentence passed on them?

[Ben Ali] Three years ago, my aim was to define the outlines of my political approach in the sphere of public freedoms and human rights. I am still opposed to capital punishment for political activities or crimes of opinion. I have not changed my opinion on that point.

The examples which you mention place us in a different context. It is up to me to exercise my onerous duty by deciding on pardons with discernment and in society's best interests. Since I came to power, there have been seven death sentences passed for foul crimes. Only one was carried out. It was an extreme case—that of a bloodthirsty madman who raped and killed around 15 very young children. I pardoned the other criminals.

[LE MONDE] Amnesty International condemned police "blunders" in the investigation into the Islamic plot. What are the facts?

[Ben Ali] Tunisia has every right to be proud of its human rights record. We unreservedly subscribed to the international convention against torture and inhuman and degrading treatment. I am personally working to ensure respect for the provisions of that convention. But, in this sphere, it is impossible to be vigilant enough. When some people mentioned abuses of power, I ordered the formation of a commission of inquiry. Let us not anticipate matters. I am waiting for the commission's report and then, if necessary, I will take the appropriate measures. Furthermore, on 17 June, the Tunis court of appeal condemned three policemen guilty of abuses of power to five years imprisonment. In addition, in the past few weeks, 22 policemen have been fired for the same reason.

[LE MONDE] It is impossible to ignore the existence of Islamic leanings in Tunisia. Are you prepared to play the game with the members of this movement who have dissociated themselves from the Renaissance Party, like Mr. Mourou and his friends?

[Ben Ali] This movement must conform to the country's laws which prohibit the creation of a religious party. It is a rule to which all the country's vital forces agreed in the framework of the National Pact signed in November 1988. The aim is to subscribe to the values and principles without which democracy cannot exist. I am still hostile to religious parties. However, my aides are in contact with Mr. Mourou. He is talking in democratic terms. I am waiting to see his program. If it is consistent with the laws governing the creation and activities of political parties, he will be given authorization, as was the case for the other parties.

[LE MONDE] Did you not raise false hopes by rapidly releasing the foreign Islamic militants imprisoned in 1987, by receiving Mr. Ghannouchi twice, and by giving them to understand that their party would be legalized, and then by failing to grant that authorization?

[Ben Ali] Their intention was clear, it has always been to create an Islamic state. These men are intolerant and undemocratic. I broke off dialogue with them when I became aware of their double-talk. I had material evidence—cassettes, computer discs. Moreover, at the appropriate time we will publish a book bringing together all that evidence.

[LE MONDE] How do you intend to tackle the actions of the most radical Islamic movement members who are living abroad?

[Ben Ali] We are sticking to the facts. Any person implicated in a crime who is living abroad is the subject of an international warrant for arrest. For the time being, for the purposes of the inquiry, we have initiated searches through Interpol for around 10 people. It is only after the legal authorities have ruled on their case that we will be able to issue warrants for their arrest. Aside from that, the question affects the host country and we respect the sovereignty of those countries. Tunisia does not welcome foreigners who indulge in subversive activities against other countries.

[LE MONDE] What do you think of the attitude of countries like France, Algeria, Sudan and, now, Iran which welcome the Islamic militants most determined to fight you?

[Ben Ali] Your question lumps together several countries and oversimplifies matters. Indeed, we must take account of many parameters—the importance which the country itself attaches to welcoming an oppositionist from another country, its motives, and the use it makes of this presence on its territory. For instance, France has a political tradition which falls within the framework of its humanitarian and liberal vision, which is very clear.

We think that vigilance is still necessary to safeguard the exemplary quality of our relations.

[LE MONDE] Do you believe in the existence of an international movement of Maghreb Islamic fundamentalists?

[Ben Ali] There is absolutely no doubt that there is a fundamentalist "international." The fundamentalist movements stem from the same source and have the same way of exploiting religion and of interpreting the texts. They pursue the same objective: The construction of a theocratic state. They use the same methods—terror, violence, crime. In these conditions, they naturally tend toward rapprochement. Moreover, they ignore the demands of progress and the major challenges of the day, only fanaticism interests and galvanizes them. The ingredients for an international are there!

Observation confirms this analysis. We know that they are in close contact with each other. Their activities are coordinated from Sudan. Just recently, hundreds of fundamentalist leaders took part in a conference in Khartoum. There were Maghrebis, Egyptians, and also Iranians, Pakistanis, and Afghans. We have irrefutable evidence, particularly videocassettes, of that subversive meeting.

In the Maghreb, all the signs are that Algeria is the focus of their attention, because of its economic and human potential and because of the specific nature of its democratic experience. They think that that country could form the cornerstone of their system. First at regional and then at international level. They are making it the support point for their strategy. In their view, the future of the Islamic movement in Algeria will be decisive for the fate of the rest of the Islamic movements, especially in the Maghreb.

Our country has chosen its path, far removed from these calculations. It has chosen democracy, modernity, and progress, without denying its cultural heritage, still less its Arab and Muslim identity. The fundamentalist plan will not succeed. The strength of our institutions, our people's vigilance, and our civilian society's determination will take up the challenge, and guarantee peace, stability, and progress for Tunisia.

[LE MONDE] The Gulf war and then the slide into violence by the Islamic fundamentalists have reopened dialogue between the government and the opposition which has become increasingly calm in recent months. What will the next stages in this open approach be?

[Ben Ali] Democracy is not a temporary choice for us, but a fundamental option which is being implemented amid dialogue with all. Tunisia has no future outside democracy. Increasing public freedoms, respecting human rights, and introducing more pluralism, that is our creed! Neither the constraints of development nor the fundamentalist threat will make us change course.

[LE MONDE] Does the fact that one party dominates the Tunisian parliament not cast a shadow over this picture?

[Ben Ali] It is not our fault that the Chamber of Deputies contains only one party. We have made great efforts to ensure that this is not the case, because we are convinced that the presence of a political party in that chamber is essential for democracy [sentence as published].

First, we envisaged allowing the president of the Republic, through transitional constitutional provisions, to appoint a specific number of deputies, as is customary in some countries. We also advocated joint Democratic Constitutional Rally [RCD]-opposition lists of candidates for the 1989 parliamentary elections. These two proposals were not accepted. Then, before the 1990 municipal elections, the electoral code was amended, notably at the opposition's request to introduce proportional representation. Those efforts elicited no response.

We can now envisage an agreement between the RCD and the opposition parties. Under the terms of that agreement, the RCD would not present any candidates in the coming by-elections in September. The opposition alone would therefore be in the running. It could therefore hold at least 10 seats in parliament. However, we know that parliamentary pluralism is only one way of serving democracy.

That is why we have included this opposition in all the bodies where the law so permitted—consultative councils, higher committee for human rights and basic freedoms, planning commissions, university and education commissions. We will tenaciously strive to ensure that pluralism becomes a greater reality. However, it is up to all sides to contribute to the realization of this objective.

[LE MONDE] During the Gulf crisis, the Tunisian position was deemed to be pro-Iraqi. Was it misunderstood or badly explained?

[Ben Ali] The Tunisian position was adopted in accordance with the fundamental principles of our foreign policy: attachment to international law, noninterference in internal affairs, and the peaceful solution of conflicts. This principled position was clearly expressed in the correspondence exchanged with the heads of state. Throughout the crisis, we maintained sustained consultation with France and took similar peace initiatives. That position has been reaffirmed several times since.

Tunisia always rejected the invasion of Kuwait, called for the withdrawal of Iraqi troops, and the restoration of the emirate's sovereignty. Moreover, despite the economic consequences which resulted, Tunisia did not depart from international law. It implemented all the Security Council resolutions on the embargo, and we are still applying that embargo. For instance, some Iraqi civilian aircraft are still being held in our country, but we are aware that this position has not been appropriately conveyed. I recently sent an envoy to the Gulf countries. Things are now better between them and us.

[LE MONDE] How can you tackle the negative economic and financial consequences of this crisis—withdrawal of Arab backers, reduction of U.S. aid, fall in tourism?

[Ben Ali] We have reacted very rapidly, and the results obtained so far are encouraging. The export of goods is continuing at a satisfactory rate, an increase of around 16 percent in the first five months. Tourism has certainly been seriously affected, as it has in all the countries in the region, but it is now picking up and we hope to consolidate on that. Foreign investment, after a short period of observation, is resuming normally, particularly in oil prospecting and extraction, and in industry.

[LE MONDE] In view of postponed and canceled meetings, does the Arab Maghreb Union [UMA] really have a future?

[Ben Ali] Yes, the UMA has a future. We believe in it and are working toward it. The Greater Maghreb is not just an ideal, it is also a requirement of our time. We are progressing, we are meeting regularly. The UMA, born three years ago, is only at the start of its regional integration process. Many structures have been established and have begun to operate.

The UMA countries are working to create five Maghreb institutions—notably the Maghreb Investment and Foreign Trade Bank, Maghreb University, and the Maghreb Academy of Sciences. The appointment of a secretary general and the choice of a seat for the general secretariat will be decided at the next summit meeting, scheduled for the end of July or beginning of August in Morocco.

[LE MONDE] What reasons prompted Tunisia to restore diplomatic relations with Tehran last September?

[Ben Ali] Immediately after the Iran-Iraq War, Tehran displayed a desire for a general normalization. The Arab world in particular was sensitive to that need. It is on the basis of mutual adherence to the principle of mutual respect and noninterference that Tunisia decided to restore its diplomatic relations with Iran. It is understood that there can be no exceptions to the principle of noninterference.

[LE MONDE] Following the assassinations of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], then Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf], and the shoot-out among Palestinians in Tunis last summer, and some other incidents, do you not ever find the Palestinian leadership's presence rather an encumbrance?

[Ben Ali] Tunisia was not the target in those murders which could have taken place in any country. The Palestinian political leadership's presence in Tunisia is not an embarrassment to us. We willingly give them our hospitality. The PLO, for its part, observes the duties and obligations imposed by that hospitality.

[LE MONDE] What contribution can Tunisia make to the Near East peace process?

[Ben Ali] The Maghreb countries have constantly actively supported the Palestinian people's cause. Tunis, a Maghreb capital, houses the PLO leadership and was where U.S.-Palestinian dialogue started. Several Arab summits, which had a positive impact on the search for a solution to the Palestinian problem, were held in the Maghreb. Two historic sessions of the Palestine National Council were held in Algiers. That is why the Maghreb is now entitled to be present at any meeting aimed at finding a solution to this question.

Kuwait

Contribution to Arab League Budget Paid

LD1507212991 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1440 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Cairo, 15 July (SPA)—The Arab League General Secretariat today received a $2.34 million check from the Kuwaiti Government. This represents the remainder of the Kuwaiti Government's contribution to the Arab League's 1991 budget which is $3.64 million. Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid was handed the check by 'Abd-al-Muhsin Nasir al-Jay'an, Kuwait's permanent delegate to the Arab League, today. It is worth mentioning that Kuwait paid $1 million toward its contribution to the Arab League budget earlier this year.

Saudi Arabia

Saudis Deny Financing Palestinian Dissident Groups

LD1607080691 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0735 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Jiddah, 16 July (SPA)—In a statement made to the Saudi Press Agency today, a responsible source denied the report published by the French magazine LE POINT in its Monday issue to the effect that Riyadh now prefers to finance Palestinian groups that have broken away from the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

The source said: "It is common knowledge that the established and constant policy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is to reject or rather condemn interference in the affairs of others. The report published by the aforementioned magazine suggesting exactly that [interference] is devoid of all truth and absolutely baseless."

Spokesman on Al-Asad Letter to Bush

LD1507221691 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1222 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Jiddah, 15 July (SPA)—A responsible source made a statement to SPA today saying: The positive reply sent by His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad to His Excellency President George Bush, comes, in our view, from the Syrian leadership's eagerness to protect the security and stability of the region and to give momentum to the peace process.

Hammadi Says U.S. Wants Destruction of Iraq

JN1507082791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0753 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 15 Jul (INA)—Prime Minister Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi has affirmed that the persistent and unfamiliar language of threats and harsh phrases demonstrates premeditated goals and emotional reactions. At a news conference this morning, he added that interference in the internal affairs of independent countries and the premeditated prevention of central authorities from exercising sovereignty over their national soil and from maintaining territorial integrity has begun to surface on the international scene.

Hammadi added that the current practices against Iraq are a clear example of this. These practices are denounced and will result in grave consequences to international security and safety.

At the news conference, attended by foreign and Arab media correspondents and INA, Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi said: Some members of the Security Council, particularly the United States, have the premeditated intention of fabricating pretexts in order to achieve another political objective; namely, the destruction of Iraq, because it emerged from the war with Iran as a strong country that enjoys an independent political will and an efficient national leadership that has the potential to stand in the face of the Zionist plans aimed at colonizing the region and placing the Arab nation under its hegemony.

The prime minister stressed that all efforts to solve the problem politically and within an Arab framework prior to 2 August 1990 were deliberately foiled so that war would erupt. He said the current uproar began for a reason that does not justify it; it is an organizational and administrative reason. The issue that is imposed now with such magnitude can be resolved easily and does not require all that currently surrounds it—that is, if the intentions are devoid of ulterior motives.

He said: The Iraqi consent to implement the Security Council resolution is definite and irreversible and we have expressed this in both words and deeds. He asked: What, then, is the purpose of this clamor?

He added: This situation adds new evidence to what we said before; namely, that the premeditated goal is to detroy Iraq, please Zionism, and implement its plans in the region.

Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi went on to say: We still believe that it is in the interest of Iraq, the Arab nation, and other regional states to look ahead to the future, regardless of the past. Therefore, we are ready to reciprocate to a positive stance and cooperate with those who choose to cooperate with us on the Arab, Islamic, and international levels. However, we cannot adopt this policy at the expense of our homeland's dignity and nation's honor.

Hammadi indicated that the Western states are now trying to create a dangerous situation for the Third World countries and national liberation movements wherever they are as a result of the pursuit of a policy of unilateralism and hegemony, which is no longer a secret.

He said that as a result our nation is facing dangers. He said that it has become clear that the U.S. Government activated the Palestine question during the aggression and immediately afterward for propagandistic reasons. He said the real purpose is to help Israel and Zionism exercise a free hand in the region's affairs and to help them achieve their expansionist objectives at the expense of Arab territory.

He stressed that what is required, in fact, is to surrender to Zionist policies, so that national independence and free dealing with national wealth will again come under colonialist hegemony. He stressed that the Arab nation's security is now being endangered more than ever. He said that the language of power is prevailing, and that intimidating small countries has become a large-scale practice. He said the Western colonialist countries no longer hide their objectives and make no efforts to cover their double standards. In fact, all that is almost exposed.

Dr. Hammadi added: All the talk about international legitimacy, the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions, and the danger of nuclear weapons is revolving around Iraq and not the Zionist entity, which usurped Palestine, occupied Arab territory, acquired nuclear weapons, and engaged in the daily repression of the Palestinian people, contrary to all UN Security Council and UN General Assembly resolutions.

He stressed that the oppressed peoples will undoubtedly resist this, and that trend of resisting colonialism will revive.

Speaking about the domestic situation in Iraq, Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi said: After restoring security and discipline throughout the country, the economic issue became the important topic at the domestic level. The government, the state departments, and the popular organizations made concerted and exceptional efforts to reconstruct the damage in the country's facilities caused by the external aggression, saboteurs, and foreign agents. Much was achieved in this field. The government successively adopted a number of economic organizational measures in the field of exports and imports to rectify the course of the national economy. Important measures were also taken to redistribute the financial burden of low-income citizens. He added: All this has been achieved, but the central issue remains tackling the serious shortage in food, medicines, medical equipment, spare parts, and the necessary raw materials to return the industrial and agricultural sectors to normal in order to produce the necessary commodities needed by the citizens.

Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi stressed that this big shortage in the availability of food and medical supplies has a special importance because of the humanitarian dimensions of this issue. This issue is linked to the life and health of all sectors of society, particularly the lower-income brackets, the children, and the ill and elderly.

Thus, it becomes clear that the economic difficulty entails a serious humanitarian dimension which must be brought to the attention of Arab, Islamic, and international public opinion as well as the world's conscience.

The prime minister said that the primary and fundamental cause of all this is the continuation of the economic blockade without any legal justification. For humanitarian reasons, the continuation of this economic blockade is not allowed—either by the UN Charter or by the Security Council resolutions themselves, which imposed this blockade.

Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi noted the obstructionist manner with which this issue was handled by certain members of the Security Council who are influential in adopting resolutions. He added that despite the fact that some partial steps were discussed for humanitarian considerations, the essence of the issue remains: the blockade continues, Iraq's assets are still frozen, and the exportation of oil is still being prevented.

He cites the UN secretary general's report of 10 April which estimated the cost of Iraq's food needs for one year at $2 billion.

He said that the real need is $2.6 billion; for medicine, it is $540 million, and agricultural supplies $956 million. This amounts to a total of slightly less that $3 billion a year.

He added that these amounts estimate the minimum basic requirements and immediate needs for one year, and that any delay in their provision renders the decisionmakers fully responsible for their inhuman decision and for what is happening to our people, especially the children, elderly, and handicapped.

In his news conference, Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi discussed the resolutions issued against Iraq by the Security Council. He said: At that point in time, the Iraqi Government clarified its opinion on these resolutions through written responses to the Security Council. Despite our opinion on the legality of these laws, the soundness of their motives, and of those who stand behind them and their real motives; despite all this, Iraq agreed to the resolution on inspection, which is Resolution 687. The government's position from the outset was that it would implement this resolution fully, to the letter and in spirit.

Turning to the current democratic process in Iraq, Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi said: I am pleased to announce that our country has truly begun the march of democratic construction, in accordance with the important decision made by the leadership in the early eighties and actively debated at the end of the war with Iran. The institution of the Council of Ministers has taken its legal form, and has begun discharging its duties normally. The process of reconsidering the exceptional laws and decisions has also begun and has made some progress. The draft law establishing party pluralism is in its final stage, and the press law is being drafted and legislated. He added: I would also like to point out that the national dialogue with the Kurdish parties' front has made large positive strides and is now nearly in its final stages.

At the news conference, Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi announced that elections within our party are now taking place in an excellent democratic atmosphere, perfect order, and a positive spirit, thus setting a good example for the domestic activities of national parties.

Responding to a question during the news conference regarding the subject of the Security Council committee's inspection of Iraq's nuclear facilities, Prime Minister Sa'dun Hammadi said: This subject was raised, and has been addressed by our permanent representative at the United Nations. It can be summarized as follows: At the beginning of the issue, we gave our answer to the Security Council on what appeared in Resolution 687 according to our understanding of the texts at that time. These texts, which were complied with and on whose basis the compliance was made, did not make the same demands of Iraq that are being made now. We (?can) provide more than these texts demand. These texts were not explained to us and their contents were not clarified. We understood these texts as they appeared, responded to them, and (?complied with their demands). When this [word indistinct] or difference in explaining these texts cropped up, we responded to [word indistinct]. The important point is that Iraq accepted and agreed to Resolution 687. It showed its willingness to execute the demands that appeared in it.

Responding to questions posed by INA on the large-scale Arab and international move initiated by Iraq to step up political pressure on the United States to make it change its aggressive course against Baghdad, on Iraq's position toward the U.S. President's recent statements calling for interference in Iraq's internal affairs, whether the Arab position will witness a new development regarding the U.S. threats to launch a new aggression against Iraq after Iraq called for an emergency Arab League Council meeting, and what is required on the Arab level to confront this threat, Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi said that the gravity of the current situation resulting from the new U.S. military threats requires Iraq to undertake an effort to expose this campaign, its goals, and the dangers it entails. He said these dangers jeopardize pan-Arab security as a whole and endanger the independence of an independent UN member state and a Third World country.

Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi added: In view of all this, we must resist, and we must undertake a diplomatic effort first to expose the purposes of this campaign and then to resist it.

At the news conference, Hammadi added: I cannot confirm that this diplomatic campaign we are undertaking will fully meet its ends. We feel, however, that we are dutybound to expose these intentions and these purposes and to provide clarifications to whomever it may concern on the Arab, Islamic, and international levels in order to resist these intentions and threats.

The prime minister added: We do not believe that there is any reason to prevent the Arab states, Arab masses, and independent Islamic states in the Third World from voicing their objection to this aggression against the independence of a UN member state. He said: We will do our best to make this campaign successful.

Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi discussed the statements by the U.S. President and said they are statements in a language unfamiliar to diplomatic life. It is a language that demonstrates emotional reactions and indicates a premeditated position.

He adds that these statements do not address the current situation or issues. If they did, they would not merit such a fuss. This proves they stem from premeditated intentions. These intentions have to do with the fact that the United States, along with some Western countries, was proceeding along the path of dealing Iraq a blow even before 2 August, and that this goes back to the period immediately after the war with Iran ended.

Regarding the required Arab stance in the current stage, the prime minister said at his news conference: As for the Arab countries, after the terrorist campaign that was waged on us and the effects of the aggression on Iraq, we expect the coming stage to be one of prophesies. The Arab countries in reality—that is, in their heart of hearts—especially the masses of the people—have begun to feel the dangers of U.S. hegemony and control, and the free Zionist hand in the region, and will now begin a phase of unrest and manifestations of opposition to this trend. This will probably take place gradually. However, it is already in its early stages.

Hammadi said: Iraq accepted Security Council Resolution 687 with all its provisions. Iraq is determined to implement the requirements of this resolution fully and completely. There is no doubt about this, and this is no retreat from it. Iraq will implement the requirements as stipulated by the provisions of the resolution. He noted that despite Iraq's view about this resolution, it is applying and implementing it as it stands.

Answering a question on the task of the international inspection commissions, the prime minister expressed his happiness at the current atmosphere of cooperation between the Iraqi authorities and these commissions. He added: Work is under way in an atmosphere of cooperation. With the exception of the incident which you know about and which caused all this clamor—the incident that took place on the eve of 'Id al-Adha—all I know is that everything the inspection commissions said was positive.

He affirmed that the Iraqi authorities issued instructions to facilitate the work of the inspection commissions. These instructions, which are unprecedented in terms of accommodation and facilitation, include the inspection of any vehicle on the road and the possibility of inspection without warning or prior announcement.

In his answer to a question on the mission of the UN secretary general's envoy Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi said: Whenever things approach a possible breakthrough, something is fabricated to obstruct any positive decision to lift the economic blockade. Among these obstructionist things are the U.S. President's recent statements, which you all know about, in which he said that the economic blockade and sanctions will not be lifted as long as President Saddam Husayn is still in power. Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi asked: Does the Security Council resolution stipulate this? Does the Security Council resolution call for changing the head of state in Iraq as a condition to lift the economic sanctions?

Dr. Hammadi said that no provision of this kind exists in the UN Security Council resolution. So who is bragging, erecting obstacles, and making excuses? Who is accurately applying the UN Security Council resolutions? Who is applying international legality and who is circumventing it? He added that during his visit to Iraq, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan was offered all the facilities he requested and more. Hammadi added: He visited Iraqi territories, including holy places. I believe he made statements on what he saw. These statements were positive, but I do not believe that they satisfy those who want to poison the atmosphere and maintain tension.

He asserted that Aga Khan's statements were not unwelcomed by U.S. officials, but he said they were statements by a UN official describing what he saw. He indicated that Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan came to Iraq as part of a relief and humanitarian aid mission in implementing the memorandum of understanding signed with the United Nations some time ago concerning organizing relief aid for the needy throughout Iraq.

Responding to a question on Iraq's interest in developing its Armed Forces, Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi said that since the usurpation of Palestine until now, Iraq and almost all Arab countries have been forced, due to the Zionist danger, to build up armed forces to defend themselves. If we view the history of the region since 1948, we find that the party that has been involved in expansion, aggression, the occupation of more Arab territories, and the imposition of hegemony in the region is the Zionist entity. He added that the Zionist entity now has armed forces that exceed all those of the Arab states combined. The whole world, he noted, knows that the Zionist entity has a huge nuclear arsenal.

The prime minister asked: Is it therefore strange that Iraq and Arab countries pay attention to their armed forces? Is this irrational when all Arab countries have been under a constant Zionist threat since 1948?

Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi said: The other issue now is that the Security Council has talked about releasing Iraq's frozen assets to enable it to buy foodstuffs and medicines, but nothing significant has been accomplished in this area thus far. There are ways to make absolutely sure that these assets are used to finance foodstuff contracts

which we make with countries that export food, such as wheat from Australia and Canada, and meats, edible oils, and other foodstuffs. For example, we told the U.S. Government frankly that we have assets there and asked it to allow us to buy food from them since we used to import rice, meat, dairy products, and other foodstuffs from the United States. Is there any doubt in this regard about the money being used for arms? Definitely not, but the intention is to starve the Iraqi people.

The prime minister added that the United States hopes the starving Iraqi people, according to its notions, will revolt and topple Saddam Husayn because they are hungry. This is the plot; the issue is not that Iraq uses finances for arms and not for food. He affirmed Iraq's willingness to discuss a program for this issue on the basis that the money that comes from releasing the assets or selling oil will be used only for financing deals on foodstuffs and medical supplies to deter the dangerous and inhuman circumstances the Iraqi people are suffering as a result of this policy.

Responding to a question by one foreign journalist, Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi said the Iraqi people know very well who is responsible for the deteriorating economic situation and that the economic boycott and the sanctions are the cause. They also know that the Western plot now is to maintain the siege on Iraq, outside the purview of the Security Council resolutions, until the causes for which these sanctions were allegedly enacted are eliminated.

The prime minister added that our people know very well who is responsible for all that. Our people are patriotic. They have fought against foreigners ever since the existence of foreigners and their influence in our country. Thoughts about toppling Saddam are a figment of the other party's imagination, not that of the Iraqi people.

He described the riots committed by the demagogues as acts of terrorism organized inside Iran before the aggression. The aggression provided the occasion on which Iran thought it could topple the Iraqi Government. He affirmed that the whole world knows that the riots and terrorism in some southern governorates took place through the organization and planning of some neighboring countries, Iran in particular.

Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi denied that there is a problem in the south and another in the north, stressing that the situation in the south is normal with no problem there whatsoever. He said Iran is trying to incite sectarian sedition in order to undermine order and security in Iraq for known reasons.

He emphasized that Iraq is now moving toward a democracy that gives free expression to all political factions in the country. He added: We are approaching a stage of democratic detente, transformation, and reorganization of our internal life.

Turning to the French attitude toward Iraq, marked by interference in its domestic affairs, the prime minister said it is an obvious interference in the affairs of an independent country.

He added: When there are riots and violations of law in any country, it is the duty of the government and central authority to maitain order and security and preserve national unity within the country. Now I am not talking about Iraq but any country in the world. When riots occur in Britain for any reason—be it political, criminal, or sports-related—what will the central government do? Will it not maintain order and security and use force if necessary?

Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi added: This is a sovereign right, the right of the central government to preserve security and order; it is even dutybound to preserve the country's unity. He continued: This represents interference in internal affairs and a serious phenomenon in today's world. He gave as an example what Yugoslavia is going through and what other countries will undergo on the pretext of their citizens being persecuted.

The prime minister said: We do not persecute our citizens. On the contrary, the Iraqi Government's major concern is to find the means by which to serve and please the citizens, improve their living standards, streamline their affairs, and lead the country toward progress. He termed the accusations leveled at Iraq in this regard as baseless, as well as being emotional and affected by a premeditated stance.

He indicated that Iraq is not the only country where riots occurred because such things can happen anywhere in the world. He wondered: Do riots not occur in France? How do the French authorities confront them? Do they not maintain security and use force if necessary?

Speaking on democratic life and party pluralism in Iraq, Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi said: Regarding political life and pluralism, the National Assembly discussed a new law for parties. The law has almost reached its final stages. It is a very progressive law. It paves the road for all those who want to contribute to political action. As with every law in the world, it requires certain criteria of all national parties. The following are among the most important characteristics: parties should not have external connections; should not receive financial aid from any nonnational group; and should work for the country's best interests, not for fragmenting and dividing the country or placing it under foreign influence. It is a progressive and sound law. I do not believe this contradicts the subject of pluralism.

Regarding Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan's proposal to release Iraq's frozen assets in the Western countries and America, the prime minister said: Iraq has asked the countries that have frozen Iraqi assets to agree on financing of specific deals for food and medical supplies from countries which export these materials to Iraq. There have been no results so far. We are ready to discuss any arrangements to guarantee the use of these

resources within the framework of Iraq's sovereignty and freedom of action without interference in its internal affairs.

Sa'dun Hammadi added: It is known that the sanctions committee allowed countries to release Iraq's frozen assets to purchase food and medical supplies. We have good assets in Britain. Why does the British Government not release these assets to purchase medicine from Britain, as we did in the past, and to purchase food supplies from other countries in accordance with signed and clear contracts? We have the right to ask this question, particularly since we used to import large quantities of medicine and medical supplies from Britain. The British market was the largest market to export medicine and medical equipment to Iraq.

At the press conference Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi stressed: Iraq is fully ready to use its frozen assets in Britain to import medicines and other medical supplies from the British market. Now that the Sanctions Committee has passed its resolution and officially informed the British Government in writing, there is no longer any legal objection to such an arrangement.

Dr. Hammadi wondered why such legal and humanitarian request, which is also beneficial to Britain, was not met. When one country asks another to take a positive and appeasing position, it should do the same thing itself.

Asked what the Iraqi Government has achieved for the people over the past period, Dr. Hammadi said that addressing the economic situation has been one of the government's major tasks. He said: If we go back and review facts and figures, I believe every objective and fair person will conclude that this government achieved a lot for the economy over the past 20 years. Those achievements carried the country forward and made it more advanced. Despite the destruction, those of you who knew Iraq 20, 15, or even 10 years ago and compare Baghdad now with what it used to be would realize that much progress has been made in all fields—quality of life, standard of living, equipment used by citizens, and consumption of commodities and services. He stressed that this government, whose concern about the economy is fundamental, has made big strides for the better over the past 20 years.

The prime minister continued: If you are asking me whether the government, which has been working and implementing programs for 20 years, has made mistakes in administrative or other areas, then my answer is yes, just like any other government. I can say without any hesitation that the achievements of this government and its concern about good economic management are great.

He stressed that the current problem lies first and foremost in the economic embargo, the sanctions, and Iraq's economic situation. He pointed out that the economic situation before the aggression was good and improving. Immediately after the war with Iran, he said, considerable progress was made in rectifying the aftermath of the war and in transforming the economy from a wartime to a peacetime economy. We achieved a lot, especially in repayment and rescheduling of debts and in signing new agreements with various nations.

Replying to a question on the means Iraq will use to avert aggression, Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi said that Iraq is currently launching a diplomatic campaign. It has called for an emergency meeting of the Arab League Council to discuss the aggression. It will also do all it can in the diplomatic field to mobilize the Arab and Islamic public opinion to avert this danger, but on the domestic level, any country that is threatened with aggression should prepare itself for this. If the aggression takes place, we will confront it however we can.

He stressed that there is a premeditated intention to carry out aggression against Iraq. The extra services Iraq provided to facilitate the inspection of its nuclear installations might have encouraged them to go too far against Iraq.

He said: Had the intentions been good, clear, and free of a premeditated objective, this issue could have been resolved easily and without this clamor. For example, when the foreign minister asked the committee to stay for more than one day to hold further discussion, it refused and left suddenly. Then the statements and the clamor began against Iraq.

Asked about the possibility of Iraq asking the United States to identify the sites that it claims have not been inspected, the prime minister said: That question should be posed to the U.S. Administration, not to me. He added: Is it at all possible that the United States, with all its known spying methods, has failed to locate such sites and attack them during the first round? There are many questions on this issue, but when there is a premeditated intention, discussion becomes impossible.

On Iraq's cooperation with the international inspection teams, Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi said Iraq presented a list on 7 July. The inspection teams are asking questions and seeking clarifications of these lists, and Iraq is giving detailed and prompt answers. So far, he added, we gave detailed information and clarifications as requested. If they ask for more information, Iraq will certainly respond. If the international teams consider what we have already supplied them with sufficient, that will be fine; if they need more information, we will give it to them.

Dr. Hammadi referred to interference in the internal affairs of other countries and said if this is really a characteristic of the new world order, then it is certainly a step backward and a return to the era of colonialist domination.

The prime minister wondered how the Sri Lankan Government, for instance, would confront any secessionist movement seeking to divide the country and how it would behave when faced with armed action. Is it not its

duty to maintain the security and unity of the country? This applies to India, Pakistan, and any other country in the world.

This policy, he said, is serious and has negative consequences for the independence of countries, especially Third World countries.

Asked about the possibility of Iraq's releasing one of the British convicts in Iraq, the prime minister said: We are holding contacts with the British Government on this, but if the latter expects a positive position from Iraq on a clear case of administrative corruption and a man convicted in accordance with local laws, then it should adopt positive positions toward Iraq. Iraq has cases similar to this in Britain.

Asked about the possibility of disclosing Iraq's food stocks, Hammadi said: As we face the intentions we mentioned, it is dangerous to say anything about this at present, because food is now a weapon. But I can assert that we have few stocks of foodstuffs, and the evidence is that we supply citizens with small amounts for their needs. It is clear that the country is experiencing a food shortage. Many UN missions have spoken about it, and a lot of information about it appeared in many international reports, especially information about the impact the shortage of food and medicine is having on children, the elderly, and the disabled. It is possible for you to visit the hospitals to see firsthand the shortage of food and medicine experienced by patients, especially children.

Dr. Hammadi discussed Iraq's position on the Security Council resolutions, saying that we accepted those resolutions and are fully implementing them.

Asked about Iraq's position on any new armed aggression against it, he said there is a known big difference between Iraq's technical-military capabilities and those of the United States. But this is not the point. Our principle is that when we are attacked, we defend ourselves with the power we have, big or small.

He stressed that Iraq is not willing to escalate statements on the possible aggression, and it is not logical for it to say what it would do if aggression takes place.

We believe, he said, that this aggression has no justification whatsoever. It must not take place. We should work to prevent it, but we cannot say what we will do if it happens. This is related to our readiness and situation. [passage indistinct]

Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi regretted the current international situation which is basically established on calculations [word indistinct] and force. He said when [words indistinct] a negative development in international life. He said that the so-called new world order is a step backward and not forward [words indistinct] the Third World countries and the national liberation movements in the world. He indicated that resisting this new situation will take time and that until then, great damage will occur to the small countries, Third World states, and the national liberation movements.

Concluding his news conference, Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi touched on the Arab future in terms of foreign threats. He said signs that the Arab countries understand the dangers of Western and Zionist hegemony, as well as what has happened, will appear before long. The masses of the Arab nation and the Muslims in the world know before governments the dangers of this hegemony, this onslaught, and the aggressive spirit being exercised in this region.

He said that with the passage of time, the Arab governments will understand the dangers of the new situation that has resulted from aggression against [word indistinct] and the region.

Saddam Answers Mubarak's Message on Weapons

JN1507141791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1352 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 15 Jul (INA)—INA has learned that President Husni Mubarak has indeed sent a message to leader President Saddam Husayn through a third party. The message warns of serious Western reaction to the tendentious accusations being promoted against Iraq over the weapons affair.

In the presence of Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz, leader President Saddam Husayn told the third party that Iraq presented a detailed list of all the weapons it possesses as required by the Security Council resolution and destroyed all equipment prohibited by the resolution or that which may be interpreted as such.

In order that the Arabs know the facts, leader President Saddam Husayn invited an Arab League commission to carry out inspections in Iraq parallel with those carried out by the UN and International Atomic Energy Agency teams. If it is not possible to form an Arab League commission, Iraq does not object to an Egyptian commission performing the task. Iraq will place at the disposal of this commission all the expertise and information it placed and is placing at the disposal of the international missions, so that the Arabs, in all their colors and persuasions, can know the facts as they stand and so they may assume a pan-Arab role in confronting the allegations of the United States and its allies, each in accordance with their abilities and beliefs.

Saddam Addresses Dhi Qar Governorate Delegation

JN1507155391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1415 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 15 Jul (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has said that the people are mirrored in their representatives and that good people represent us all wherever they exist in Iraq. We build on good men and positions, he added.

The president was speaking while receiving a delegation representing the cities, villages, and marshlands of Dhi Qar Governorate made up of a group of men of religion, notables, intellectuals, tribal chiefs, women leaders, and National Assembly members. He said Iraqi men are represented by good men and Iraqi women are represented by good women.

The president honored the delegation by granting each member the right to seek the president's protection on behalf of anyone having court cases pending against them for their involvement in demagogic acts. In this respect the president said: We ought to advise those who take wrong positions and guide them along the right path. If they fail to take the advice, then their path will differ from that of the people.

Through speeches and poems, the delegation expressed the sentiments of love and loyalty felt by the sons of the governorate for President Saddam Husayn and their absolute belief in the march of the revolution and their readiness to make sacrifices for its sake. They denounced the crimes perpetrated against our people by the aggressors, their agents, and the demagogues.

The audience was attended by Hasan 'Ali, member of the Regional Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party; Nuri Faysal Shahir, governor of al-Qadisiyah [as received]; and the secretary of the party in the governorate.

Bush Reaction to Syrian Move on Talks Noted

JN1507181891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1650 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] London, 15 Jul (INA)—U.S. President George Bush has termed the response he received from the head of the Syrian regime to the recent U.S. proposals on the Middle East very positive. Prior to his meeting with Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti in London today and a few hours before the opening of the summit of the big seven industrialized nations, President Bush told journalists: We are still studying the details, but the reply is very positive.

The reply of the Syrian regime was conveyed to the White House through the U.S. Embassy in Damascus. The reply includes Hafiz al-Asad's acceptance of a one-time peace conference on the Middle East in which the UN representative will play the role of a silent observer.

Yesterday, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker described the Syrian response as "positive" and said Damascus has never before shown such harmony. At the same time, he said that the U.S. State Department believes the reply does not contain preconditions.

Press Says Bush's 'Threats' Show New 'Aggression'

JN1507165591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0644 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 15 July (INA)—Two Iraqi papers have asserted that the schemes of a new U.S. aggression against Iraq show international and Arab institutions responsibilities and test their justifications for existence and their capabilities.

In editorials today, AL-THAWRAH and AL-QADISIYAH assailed U.S. President Bush's threats and his escalation of the campaign in preparation for launching a new aggression against Iraq despite all the facilities it provided to implement the UN Security Council resolutions and its declaration that it categorically respects its pledges to facilitate the missions of the UN committees and put its entire peaceful nuclear program under inspection.

AL-THAWRAH, mouthpiece of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, says that for nearly one year, struggling Iraq has been subjected to an unjust embargo that included the bread, medicine, and other essentials for its people. The paper says this embargo is a crime being committed within the sight and earshot of the UN Security Council and the United Nations. However, the Security Council member states are taking no practical moves to lift the embargo as dictated by the unjust resolutions against Iraq.

The paper adds that Iraq's practical stand removes all pretexts of the evil and aggressive forces led by the U.S. President, but the paper notes that the stand of these forces contradicts international rights and legitimacy. Moreover, Bush, who derives pleasure from war, has threatened to launch an aggression against Iraq.

The paper notes that under U.S. control, the UN Security Council is disregarding all Iraq's requests to lift the blockade and did not convene any session or issue a resolution despite all the documents on U.S. aircraft violations of Iraqi airspace and despite all documents on Iranian border and cease-fire violations. The paper says the UN Security Council is put to the final test before public opinion and the Arab nation, which has paid a dear price for the incompetence of the international legitimacy throughout the past half-century in terms of its sovereignty and the blood of its sons. The Arab nation is now witnessing what makes it believe that international legitimacy is turning into a yes-man at the American war court.

The paper adds that the Arab League is facing a harder test. If the Arab nation has any remaining hopes for the continuation of the Arab League and its assumption of its responsibilities after all that happened and after the aggression of the enemy and brother, the Arab League's

assumption of its pan-Arab responsibilities is considered the last hope to prove its competency, legality, and worthiness.

AL-QADISIYAH, published by the Defense Ministry, says that the U.S. threats to strike at Iraq launched by Bush and which are being echoed by his allies, followers, and agents are not for local consumption or merely to exercise pressure and extortion. These are serious threats which set the stage for a new comprehensive aggression against Iraq. This aggression is not aimed against specific military targets, but it is a military campaign aimed at destroying the remaining living and economic facilities and at hitting again and destroying what the great Iraqi people have rebuilt.

The paper adds that the Iraqi people realize that the plot against them is continuing and that it will not achieve its political objectives on the ground. They also realize that the previous chapters of the conspiracy failed and Iraq emerged safe with its geographical, political, and social map. This is what Washington was primarily aiming at in its sinful aggression.

The paper asserts that it is not strange for Washington to ride a "Security Council" and use it as a cover and a pretext for preparing aggression against Iraq and to make its supporters prepare for this aggression.

The paper urges those whom it describes as America's "victims" at the Security Council to rapidly revive their conscience and to stand against U.S. arrogance, which is aimed against a steadfast, struggling people who are facing the fiercest of colonialist powers.

Bush Suffering From 'Malaise Called Iraq'

JN1607091391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0705 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 16 Jul (INA)—The newspaper AL-'IRAQ has said that U.S. President Bush insists on overstepping all bounds to provoke Iraq and whip up a feverish atmosphere for waging a fresh aggression on it under flimsy pretexts.

The newspaper, published here today, said in its editorial that Bush also insists on making bogus accusations to cast Iraq in a false light before the international community, making it seem as though it were ignoring the UN resolutions or placing obstacles before the inspection committees and hindering them from performing their tasks inside our country.

The newspaper affirmed that this U.S. position reveals once again the sly, hidden intentions of the U.S. Administration whose goal is to strike Iraq, hit at its people, destroy its achievements and cultural, civilizational, and scientific sites, and cut down its Arab and regional role.

The newspaper clarified that U.S. President Bush is now suffering from a malaise called Iraq, especially after he ascertained that the Iraqis, through their unique heroic stand, rare sacrifices, and adherence to their leader Saddam Husayn, had overcome all the effects of the unjust war and indiscriminate aggression led by the United States against their land, existence, and future generations.

The newspaper stressed that the U.S. President's insolent threats and language about waging a new aggression on Iraq will not shake the Iraqis. Strong Iraqi determination can confront the forces of oppression and tyranny. The aggressors will only reap defeat, disgrace, and eternal shame.

U.S. Plans Final Chapter of 'Conspiracy'

JN1607095691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0625 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 16 Jul (INA)—AL-QADISIYAH has said that Iraq knows very well that the conspiracy to destroy it and its military, economic, and scientific infrastructure is being carried out in the interest of the corrupt Zionist entity to serve its expansionist ambitions, which coincide with and fully conform to imperialist U.S. and Western goals. The newspaper affirmed in its editorial today: Whether the new military aggression on Iraq takes place or not, the conspiracy continues since it was not born yesterday.

It clarified that the scheme to destroy Iraq was prepared by the U.S. Administration many years ago, and it acquired an imperialist urgency when Iraq emerged victorious from the war against Iran.

The newspaper stressed that this historic animosity toward Iraq, which is manifesting itself in this conspiracy through oppressive acts of aggression, requires the appropriate deterrents to prevent the remaining chapters from being implemented and stop more pretexts for a new military aggression from being created.

It pointed out that through clear diplomatic efforts in the United Nations, Iraq presented all the evidence and documents to expose the U.S. goals and allegations now being used as a cover to wage war against it. Iraq clearly announced its readiness to cooperate with any investigative efforts by the United Nations and other participants in order to confirm its total respect for the pledges it made regarding the Security Council resolutions.

The newspaper affirmed that Washington does not care about facts or the extent of Iraq's credibility, but wants to proceed to the final chapter of the conspiracy under any pretext or cover to destroy Iraq and harm its people.

The paper called on the international community, headed first by our Arab nation, to shoulder their responsibility by confronting this U.S. belligerence, whose objective is to transform this land into a jungle where the only law is: might makes right.

The newspaper stressed at the conclusion of its editorial that while Iraq is struggling to avert a new stage of unjust oppression, its people will not give in to the desires of American hegemony, irrespective of the huge sacrifices they have to make.

It added that there is none among the Iraqi people, including its children, women, elderly, or men, who would hand over his homeland to the ugly American, accept enslavement by the U.S. spear, and forfeit his dignity, honor, and freedom regarding his political choice. It affirmed that Iraq has existed since the dawn of history and will continue to exist in dignity and honor, whether the enemies like or not. So to hell with them.

U.S. Trying To Break Willpower of Iraqis

JN1607123291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0635 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 16 Jul (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH affirmed that the U.S. Administration has once again arrogantly threatened in public to wage a fresh, all-out aggression on Iraq and its people.

The newspaper said in an article it published here today that the new stage of U.S. aggression, which has not stopped since 17 February and which took on a political, economic, and psychological form after the cease-fire, does not target sites and equipment. Its objective is to realize the central goals the first stage of aggression failed to achieve, despite the U.S.-Atlantic-Zionist alliance which used the fiercest and most violent destruction machine ever known in the history of wars.

The newspaper clarified that the purpose of the new U.S. aggression is to break the willpower of the Iraqi people and sever the bonds of solidarity and unity of destiny between the people and their heroic Armed Forces. The newspaper pointed out that what infuriates the Bush Administration—in fact, what is eating away at it—is that its aggression on Iraq—with all its different stages, weaponry, and consequences—has not curbed the Iraqi will to rise up and rebuild. It has not affected the Iraqi people's convictions regarding their political, economic, and social choices.

The newspaper stressed that the new U.S. aggression clearly reflects the extent of Bush's indulgence in his arrogance, aggressiveness, lust for revenge, and great desire to harm and ruin the Iraqi people.

The paper also said that the past few months have shown that the United States has no credibility in realizing a just and permanent solution to the Palestine question based on the resolutions of international legitimacy regarding this cause and the Arab-Israeli conflict in general.

The newspaper warned that the U.S. Administration will once again be deluding itself if it believes for one moment that its new aggression could harm the Iraqi people's will, steadfastness, and high morale, dissuade them from adhering to their loyal and wise leadership and its national, pan-Arab, and humanitarian course, and distract them from their free choice to rebuild and live.

The newspaper concluded that the proud Iraqi people are not the kind to submit or yield to threats and blackmail. The new aggression will only increase their determination and perseverence to proceed down the path of progress and rise up with the banner of their leader and symbol, President Saddam Husayn.

Front Urges End to U.S. 'Aggressiveness'

JN1607133091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1256 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 16 Jul (INA)—The National Progressive and Patriotic Front has urged international organizations, political parties and forces, and humanitarian and legal unions to act speedily and effectively to put an end to U.S. aggressiveness and attempts to launch a fresh aggression against Iraq. In a statement issued on the 23d anniversary of the 17-30 July revolution, the front called for lifting the economic blockade imposed on the Iraqi people so that they would be able to pursue their march of reconstruction and development.

The front said that Arab and international humanitarian organizations should shoulder their responsibilities and launch a worldwide campaign to denounce the appetite for killing and destruction through which the U.S. Administration is attempting to threaten and blackmail and firmly control the peoples of the world.

Continued U.S. Airspace 'Violations' Reported

JN1507171191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2058 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] New York, 14 Jul (INA)—Iraq has again protested against the U.S. Air Force's continued violation of its airspace for the purposes of reconnaissance and provocation. This was contained in two memorandums Iraq sent to the UN secretary general today. One of the two memorandums said the U.S. aircraft carried out 29 sorties in 12 formations each consisting of two planes, and five single-plane sorties on 12-13 July.

The sorties, carried out at speeds of 700-900 km per hour and at altitudes of 2 to 8.5 km, were concentrated over Mosul, Dahuk, Irbil, al-'Amadiyah, Rawandoz, and Zakho.

The second memorandum pointed out that the U.S. Air Force has continued its violations for the second consecutive day. On 13-14 July, U.S. aircraft carried out 32 sorties in 15 formations of two planes each and two single-plane sorties. The memorandum said the airspace violations, which were concentrated over Irbil, Mosul, Dahuk, and Rawandoz, were carried out at speed of 600-900 km per hour and at low and medium altitudes.

Memo on Iranian Cease-Fire 'Violations'

JN1507190091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1700 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] New York, 15 Jul (INA)—Iraq informed the United Nations today that Iran continues to violate its cease-fire agreement with Iraq. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, Iraq's permanent UN representative, said in a memorandum to the international organization that on 7 and 8 July, the Iranian side fired several rounds toward forward Iraqi units in the southern sector. The memorandum states that on 9 July, the Iranian side fired a 60-mm mortar shell and an RPG-7 rocket at forward Iraqi positions in the central sector.

The memorandum further adds that an Iranian F-5 penetrated Iraqi airspace for 3 km at a very low speed and at an altitude of 400 meters near Mandali. On the same day, the memorandum added, a fighter plane coming from Iranian territory violated Iraqi airspace at an altitude of 1 km. It advanced 1 km inside Iraqi airspace over the al-Faruq police post before returning toward the Darawan mountains in Iran.

The memorandum stressed that these new violations of the cease-fire agreement between the two countries, together with previous ones, prove beyond a doubt that the Iranian Government is deliberately seeking to harm Iraq's sovereignty and security.

In the memorandum, the Iraqi Government holds the Iranian Government fully responsible for all the damage cause by the violations. It calls on the United Nations to stop these violations by taking measures provided for in the principles and provisions of its charter.

Repression Reportedly Escalates in Shiite Cities

NC1607085091 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 0445 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] On the occasion of the advent of Muharram, the month of the blood oath to Imam al-Husayn, peace be upon him, and in an expression of the nightmare of terror that is gripping the 'Aflaqi regime symbols and their inability to foresee future events, the humiliated Saddam has sent complete regiments of his forces to the streets of the holy cities.

The cities of Karbala', al-Najaf, al-Kadhimiyah, al-Thawrah, and a number of other important Shiite centers have been the scene of unusual movements by regiments of Saddam's butchers disguised in local native dress. Our sources in Karbala' have reported that these butchers came from the Republican Guard and the special repression units. They added that the holy cities have come under the revolutionaries' control since the first day of Muharram. Saddam's men find it difficult to stay in the cities at night because they are pursued and engaged in combat. The sound of gunfire has also become a normal phenomenon for the citizens of al-Najaf, Karbala', and Baghdad.

Our sources added that the criminal regime recently adopted a new method for liquidating the leaders of the uprising and prominent social figures in a number of Iraqi cities, running over them with speeding cars in the streets or hiring assassins who immediately flee after committing their crimes. The state of anger and turmoil is still escalating in most Iraq's cities and this could mean that the situation will turn into a tumultuous uprising in the next few days.

25- to 27-Year-Old Conscripts Discharged

JN1607080891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0700 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Baghdad, 16 Jul (INA)—The discharge of reserve conscripts born in 1964, 1965, and 1966 who are currently on reserve duty in the Armed Forces was announced here today.

Staff Lieutenant General Husayn Kamil, minister of defense, said in a statement to AL-QADISIYAH that discharging conscripts from the abovementioned years will take place regardless of the period of reserve duty they have served until 1 April 1991, just as the discharge of those born in 1961, 1962, and 1963.

The defense minister added that those born later, since 1967, will have to serve the full tour of duty from the time of entering the service until they are released. He pointed out that discharging the reserves comes as part of the direct instructions of President Saddam Husayn and the leadership's policy to continue discharging reserve conscripts in accordance with an agenda.

Mourning Rites Banned, Arrests Continue

LD1507124691 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] In order to prevent the spread of a wave of opposition during the mourning period for Abu-'Abdallah Husayn, the lord of the martyrs, [commemorating death of third Shiite imam] the Iraqi regime has banned any mourning in the Muslim holy places in that country.

Quoting an Iraqi refugee who recently arrived in the Islamic Republic of Iran, IRNA reports: The Baghdad regime, fearing an uprising by followers of the lord of the martyrs, has ordered that during the month of Muharram [13 July to 1 August] the doors of all mosques, mourning centers, and holy shrines of Iraq must be closed to the people. On the basis of this order, leave has been canceled for all civil servants, particularly military personnel and security forces, so that the people may be controlled.

According to remarks made by the Iraqi refugee, the arrest of opponents and their transfer to unknown destinations in Iraq still continue.

Kurdish Radio Says Talabani Interview Distorted

NC1607040991 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1725 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] We would like to clarify the following:

In its 15 July 1991 edition, issue No. 7671, the Baghdad newspaper AL-THAWRAH published an interview with brother Jalal Talabani. The interview contains a number of inaccurate statements which have prompted brother Talabani to decline from making any statements whatsoever so they will not be distorted and mutilated again. We hope that papers will publish the full, undistorted text of interviews and press statements made by brother Jalal Talabani, particularly since we are experiencing such crucial times. We felt that clarification was necessary.

Leaders, Spokesmen React to Syrian Move on Talks

Shamir's Office

TA1507162191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker will arrive here next week. A message to this effect was received in Jerusalem this afternoon.

In a preliminary reaction to Syrian President al-Asad's letter to President Bush, the Prime Minister's Office says that if his reply will enable Syria to conduct direct and unmediated negotiations with Israel, we will take a positive view of it. All Israel has ever wanted has been to sit down to negotiations without preconditions with the Arab countries.

Our political correspondent Arye Golan reports that the Prime Minister's Office stresses, however, that Israel will stand firm on all its stands and principles as expressed in Prime Minister Shamir's letter to President Bush.

Foreign Minister David Levi, too, expresses the hope that the reply is indeed positive and that it reflects a change in the Syrian stand, which has always been intransigent and extreme. We are on the brink of a possible regional conference that will lead to direct negotiations between the parties on the basis of understandings achieved with the Americans, said David Levi as he reviewed his ministry's activities at the Knesset.

Shamir Spokesman Pazner

LD1607085591 Paris France-Inter Radio Network in French 0600 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Excerpts] The United States has achieved a diplomatic breakthrough in the Middle East. That is how George Bush views the positive response by Syria to the American peace plan. [passage omitted]

The Israeli government clings to its stand. The Syrian answer is positive, if it allows direct dialogue between Jerusalem and Damascus. Shamir's spokesman still tried to reject the idea of an international conference. Pierre Weil interviews Avi Pazner:

[Pazner] As you say, the Syrian answer is positive. If it allows the opening of direct negotiations between us and Syria, this would be a step forward because, as you know, Israel has always wanted direct negotiations, without intermediaries, without an international conference, face-to-face negotiations with the Arabs. There is a big if, because we have not received Syria's answer. I think we shall only have it next week when Mr. Baker comes. It is only then that we shall know for sure if there is a possibility of negotiation.

Sources—'Approaching Our Red Lines'

TA1607050691 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] We are approaching our red lines. This was the reaction of political sources in Jerusalem prior to the talks scheduled for the beginning of next week with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. Our political correspondent Arye Golan reports on the problems that still must be resolved on the way to the peace conference.

Two problems will figure at the center of the talks that will be held next week between Prime Minister Shamir, Ministers Levi and Arens, and Secretary of State Baker: the Palestinian representation and the status to be accorded to the United Nations at the conference. Prime Minister Shamir insists that the nomination of the Palestinian representatives in the Jordanian delegation be coordinated with Israel. Israel is unwilling to meet with overt or covert representatives of the PLO during the conference or in the course of the subsequent negotiations. Prime Minister Shamir is also adamant in his opposition to awarding the United Nations any status whatsoever at the conference. There is no such thing as a passive observer, sources at the Prime Minister's Office asserted; the observer represents the United Nations and is also obligated to report to that organization. Any UN presence at the conference would have significance and repercussions. Why must the United Nations accompany direct negotiations, sources close to the prime minister asked, pointing out that the organization has still not accepted the Camp David accords.

Beyond all the questions of frameworks and procedures, there is still Security Council Resolution 242. Each side has its own interpretation regarding the issue of territory for peace, and the United States has suggested that the issue of specific territories should be decided only through negotiations. Israel's position stipulates that 242 does not require Israel to withdraw from all the territories and does not actually require any withdrawal whatsoever. It only stipulates the principle of withdrawal from territories. Israel has returned all of the Sinai peninsula, but Israeli law and administration has already been fully applied to the Golan Heights, and it is an inseparable part of the country. The Camp David accords, on the other hand, state that Israel must withdraw its military forces from Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip within the framework of an autonomy plan. These are the positions and the red lines Secretary of State Baker will encounter next week. Although the visit will take place in the middle of the summer, it will be no picnic.

Jerusalem 'Cautious'

TA1507152791 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 15 Jun 91

[Report by political correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Excerpts] So far, Jerusalem has received only partial information on the content of al-Asad's reply to Bush. The details obtained from Washington reveal that the

spirit of the Syrian letter is indeed positive. The Americans have already stated that they consider al-Asad's reply positive.

In the letter, al-Asad accepts the compromise proposals with regard to the UN representative, who will be a silent observer, and to the noncontinuity of the peace conference. As far as is known, Syria is also willing to accept a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

Judging by the report Israel has received from Washington, al-Asad is neither asking for anything specifically nor is he posing any conditions concerning the compromise proposal. In view of this, the United States regards the Syrian response as a positive development. [passage omitted]

Jerusalem believes that in view of recent developments, it is now very probable that Secretary of State Baker will return to the region very soon. Although the date is not known, Baker may arrive next week, if such a trip can be fitted into his schedule.

The only remaining question is: What now? Will Israel also view the Syrian reply as a positive development? No one knows. The Syrian letter also speaks of an international presence, which is less acceptable to Israel. Now that Washington obviously sees the reply as an encouraging development, the ball has passed to the Israeli court.

Meanwhile, Jerusalem has issued a cautious reaction. It is examining and weighing the facts, reluctant to enter an unnecessary confrontation with the United States. At this moment, Foreign Minister David Levi is addressing the Knesset with a review of his ministry's activities. He is expected to deliver the initial Israeli reaction to the Syrian reply.

Levi Briefs Knesset

TA1607105191 Jerusalem Government Press Office in English 15 Jul 91

["Excerpts" from Foreign Minister David Levi's address to the Knesset on 15 July]

[Text] The past year has witnessed a significant change in Israel's international position. In the wake of dramatic changes in the world and the region, Israel has emerged from a state of isolation and alienation and has become a focus of broad international activity. From a position of standstill, the peace process has begun to move.

The intensity of political contacts and meetings with both foreign ministers and heads of state in the past year has been unprecedented. World leaders, particularly from the Western states, are today attentive to Israel's message and are interested in hearing it. This dialogue has brought changes and results.

A year ago, our relations with the United States seemed to be in a crisis. There were even some who claimed that Israel is not interested in peace. Today, there is an open dialogue between Israel and the United States, and Israel's basic positions are better understood and supported by the United States—despite certain differences of opinion which remain.

The U.S. has conducted a "re-examination" of its positions vis-a-vis the Middle East and the Persian Gulf and of its evaluations of the various components of the conflict and the means to resolve it. We are today in the midst of a political process which, we hope, will lead to direct peace negotiations.

The political approach which prevailed just last year in Europe was alien to our basic positions. The advancement of our economic affairs with the European Community in preparation for 1992 was suspended, and discussions on new plans for scientific cooperation were frozen. Europe's outlook today is more balanced.

Its approach towards Israel and its positions have changed, as has its entire perception of the issues in the Middle East. This new openness to an understanding of our affairs has also opened the prospects for Israel's integration in the European economic zone. These prospects will increase with the advancement of the peace process. Discussions begin tomorrow between an interministerial team of experts headed by the director general of the Foreign Ministry and a team of experts from the EEC. These talks are designed to resolve the problems still pending in the framework of the 1975 agreement and to discuss ways to integrate Israel in the future European zone.

We have also experienced in the last year a rapprochement with the countries of Eastern Europe, first and foremost with the Soviet Union. Relations have been resumed with the USSR on the level of consulate general, in anticipation of the establishment of full diplomatic relations. The visit in Israel by Mr. Bessmertnykh was the first visit by a Soviet Foreign Minister since the founding of the state. We also witnessed the first visit of a Polish head of state—President Lech Walesa—and other heads of state.

Eastern Europe is striving to strengthen its political and economic relations with us. For the first time since 1967, Israeli embassies have been opened in Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. Yesterday full diplomatic relations, broken in 1973, were renewed between Israel and the Congo (Brazzaville). Portugal has decided to establish a resident embassy in Israel, to be opened this summer.

Even Albania, which never had diplomatic relations with us, has expressed the desire to do so.

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait did not surprise us. We knew of the aggressive intentions of the Iraqi Ba'th regime, and we took Saddam Husayn's threats most seriously.

In July 1990, ten days before the invasion of Kuwait, I warned the European "Troika" of what was about to happen at our meeting in Jerusalem. This fact, and the fact that the European countries ignored our warning,

are today mentioned again and again by these states themselves. They also recall our prognosis that economic sanctions would not achieve their goal, that Iraq would not withdraw, and that war was unavoidable. And they recall our affirmation that Israel would in any eventuality be a target for Iraqi aggression in an attempt to drag us into the war. The world received a clear demonstration of the danger which has always threatened Israel, and has achieved an understanding of Israel's right to defend itself. At the United Nations General Assembly last September, I spoke of the meaning of the frightening combination of the wielding of tremendous military power and the utter lack of inhibition to use it. I said that a megalomaniac tyrant incapable of properly balancing matters, does not know the meaning of the balance of fear and is not guided by it. The nations of the world weathered this terrible experience in the 1930's and '40's. Israel reiterated, both before and in the course of the war, that any outcome that would not lead to the downfall of the regime and the total destruction of the Iraqi war machine would, in the not too distant future present the world with an even greater threat.

All this led to a re-evaluation of Israel's action, a decade ago, to destroy the Iraqi nuclear reactor. The shortsightedness of the free world, headed by the five permanent members of the Security Council, was highlighted and given concrete form, by their fortifying Saddam Husayn with huge quantities of sophisticated weapons, without supervision. The enlightened countries contributed with their own hands to the terrible threat of destruction and endangered the world economy.

Other states in our region are also engaged in rapidly arming themselves with weapons of mass destruction—most notably Syria. Israel has repeatedly warned, especially in recent months, against supplying Syria with missiles that are more sophisticated and precise than those used by Iraq. Israel warned the Western states not to repeat the Iraq syndrome of placing large quantities of destructive weapons in the hands of a totalitarian regime.

In my talks with European leaders I argued that the governments are responsible for what is done within their borders and for the technology and knowhow exported from their countries to dictatorial regimes. We shall not rest until we are sure that every country is doing all in its power to deny our enemies weapons designed to be used against us. In several countries steps have already been taken to increase control over the exporting of destructive weapons, but this is not enough.

Israel is today following with concern the attempts by the Iraqi ruler to prevent the U.N. experts from performing their duty in accordance with the Gulf war ceasefire agreement. It is today clear that our fears and warnings that the Gulf war would not lead to the destruction of the Iraqi military machine have been realized. Saddam Husayn and his army were not defeated in war, and Iraq will continue to pose a threat to peace in the region and to the world economy.

Without a firm international effort against Iraq's attempts to conceal the destructive weapons in its possession and without the destruction of its potential to develop such weapons, the Middle East is liable to find itself in an even deeper whirlpool than that which we witnessed several months ago.

The newly sober world well understands the position of Israel as the sole democracy in an embroiled and violent region. Israel has challenged the enlightened world to reevaluate the nature of the Arab-Israel conflict and to place it in its proper historical and political light.

There is a greater understanding that the roots of the long and bitter conflict have for decades lain in the refusal of the Arab states—with the exception of Egypt—to recognize the existence of Israel and to accept its sovereign independence. This uncompromising position was the source of the wars imposed upon Israel, and between wars was translated into virulent propaganda, economic blockades, acts of terror and ruthless aggression.

The world has also been shown the tragedy of the Arab peoples, whose rulers mortgaged their resources to the constant arms race and to the perpetuation of destructive enmity—at the expense of the progress and prosperity of their people.

The pacifist mask which the PLO temporarily assumed has been removed, revealing its ugly and violent face in taking a stand alongside Saddam Husayn. The world was also shown the weakness of Jordan, in the role it assumed in the Gulf crisis. It was not hard to imagine Israel's situation, had there been territorial continuity from Baghdad to its borders. This led to an understanding of Israel's interest in the stability of the Jordanian regime, and no less so the importance which Israel attaches to the territories of Judaea and Samaria for its security.

All these were placed at the focus of Israel's political message. Its primary message was the demand that the Western states no longer acquiesce to the continuation of the state of war between the Arab states and Israel. At a time when the cold war has come to an end, when the states of the free international community are witnessing the fall of the Berlin wall and the opening of a new age in relations between peoples and states, these same states should not accept the continued existence of the wall of Arab hostility, seeking to strangle Israel in a vise.

This situation, we argued, is not a natural law, nor can it persist as an eternal curse. Once the iron curtain has been removed from Eastern Europe, the curtain of desert sand cannot be allowed to remain in the Middle East, separating it from the world which seeks to inaugurate a new order.

The events of the Gulf exposed the roots of instability in the Middle East. For years the Palestinian problem had been presented as the crux of the Middle East conflicts.

The Gulf war came and proved otherwise. It was demonstrated that a conflict seemingly local and of secondary importance, occurring among the Arab states themselves, threatened the economic stability of the entire world.

Greater understanding was also obtained of our position that the Palestinian component of the struggle cannot be dealt with in isolation and divorced from the overall solution, in which the Arab states will recognize Israel, cease military and economic warfare and embark on the course of cooperation and peace.

Thus, the Gulf crisis placed the Arab conflict in its proper proportions. The recognition by the Western states that Israel is indeed threatened by the states of the region and that there is a constant and real threat to its survival, perhaps for the first time demonstrating the logic behind Israel's demand that peace must also ensure Israel's security and the safety of its people. [sentence incomplete as received]

Israel's basic, traditional positions which were in the past rejected as unrealistic, and which sometimes led Israel to be presented as spurning peace, are now voiced openly and are received with understanding and agreement. This was the background for my first meeting with the U.S. Secretary of State, and also characterized most of my talks with other world statesmen.

In January of this year I publicly presented a five-point plan for advancing the peace process, based on the peace initiative of the government of Israel, as follows:

1. An end to the state of war between the Arab states and Israel.
2. Supervision of the reduction of the arms race in the region.
3. Direct peace negotiations without preconditions between Israel and the Arab states.
4. A parallel solution to the Palestinian problem, by stages, through negotiations between Israel and the residents of the territories—preferably in a joint framework with Jordan.
5. The formulation of joint economic projects for regional development, with international assistance, in the areas of water, electricity, infrastructure, agriculture and health.

These points laid the foundation for the political process in which we have been involved since the ceasefire in the Gulf. The United States and the European states accepted these principles. This marked a turning point in the efforts to establish peace in our region.

Israel has once again taken the initiative. Direct negotiations as the way for the different parties to discuss and resolve their differences, among themselves, has gained acceptance. The Israeli initiative paved the way for the Secretary of State's shuttle diplomacy in the region.

In the course of four consecutive visits in the region, a series of firm understandings were achieved between Israel and the United States, which were also accepted by Europe and the Soviet Union. We are today faced with the possibility of the convening of a regional conference as an opening for direct negotiations between the parties, on the basis of these understandings, as follows:

1. Simultaneous progress, along two tracks, in peace negotiations between Israel and the Arab states and between Israel and the Arab residents of Judaea, Samaria and Gaza.
2. The negotiations will be direct and without preconditions.
3. The peace process is not designed to lead to a Palestinian state.
4. The PLO will not be a partner in the peace process and will take no part in it, whether direct or indirect.
5. The negotiations on the Palestinian issue will be conducted in stages (as described in the Camp David Accords).
6. The Palestinian representatives from Judaea, Samaria and Gaza will be those who accept the two-track approach and the solution of the Palestinian problem by stages, and who are prepared to live in peace with Israel.
7. Israel is not called upon to accept the demand of "territories for peace" as a precondition to direct negotiations.
8. The conference will not have the authority to decide. It will not be a platform for discussions or appeals. Its sole purpose will be to bring about direct negotiations between the parties.
9. Agreement has been reached on the establishment of bilateral working groups between Israel and the Arab states to advance and implement projects for regional development, with international funding.

10. Every party which wishes to participate in the process, including the Soviet Union—and Europe—must accept the format and principles agreed upon with the United States.

We are still faced with unresolved problems—but as Secretary of State Baker has said, the number of issues yet to be resolved is much smaller than those agreed upon.

The delay in the process to date derives from the obstacles and the conditions which Syria has placed and to its procrastination in replying to President Bush's appeal. Yesterday we received from Washington the first indications of the substance of President al-Asad's reply to President Bush's letter of early June. We expect to receive the full substance of the reply soon. If it will indeed emerge that there has been a positive change in Syria's positions—we will welcome it, and we will encourage it.

Israel expects the United States to stand firm by the understandings and agreements achieved in the course of our talks with Secretary Baker, as outlined above.

From this platform I appeal to the leaders of the Arab states: Put an end to the mad arms race. Put an end to destruction. Put aside blind hatred. Do not destroy your

resources in vain. Do not exchange the chances for progress and prosperity in your countries for the illusory narcotic of the destruction of Israel. Israel is strong and firmly entrenched the region, and no storm will uproot it. It derives its power not from the force of arms, but from the strength of its moral and historic right to live in safety in its land.

We never saw ourselves as your enemies. Embark on the course of peace. Think of your children, as we think of our children. They were not born to the sword, but to life.

[Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 16 July carries a related report by Gid'on Alon on page A4, adding that in his unrehearsed reply to a query by Knesset Member Ran Kohen of the Citizens Rights Movement, Levi sounded "dismayed about ministers such as Yuval Ne'eman, who rushed to comment on the Syrian reply to Bush's letter without even having seen it. 'No one was authorized by the cabinet to react to the Syrian letter, so that anything anyone may have said does not represent the cabinet's position.' He claimed that those who rejected the Syrian reply even before reading it hurt Israel and demonstrated political irresponsibility.

["Referring to southern Lebanon, Levi said that we do not want even 1 inch of land there. Our presence in southern Lebanon stems from our concern for the welfare of our citizens. He claimed that 'when the time comes and all the foreign forces are asked to leave Lebanon, and it again becomes a docile country that does not threaten our settlements, a country free of elements that want to harm us, then we will sit down together with the Lebanese Government, and I am convinced we will reach an agreement satisfactory to both sides. We have no territorial demands on Lebanon,' Levi said."]

Levi Says Syrian Stand Welcome

TA1507153591 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1505 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Report by Asaf Ya'ari from the Knesset—live]

[Text] A few minutes ago, Foreign Minister David Levi told the Knesset plenum that an announcement received from Washington states that Secretary of State James Baker will arrive in Israel at the beginning of next week. Levi made these remarks in the framework of a reply to Knesset members' questions on Foreign Ministry activities.

Judging by reports from the United States, said the foreign minister, the Syrian reply is not unequivocal. If their stance has undergone a change, however, perhaps progress will be possible.

[Begin Levi recording] So far, the delays in the peace process stemmed from the obstacles and conditions posed by Syria and by its delay in forwarding a reply to President Bush's appeal. Last night, Washington provided us with initial information on the main features of President al-Asad's reply to President Bush's letter of early June. We expect to receive details of the reply soon. If we learn that the Syrian stance has undergone a positive turnaround, we will welcome it. [end recording]

Minister Levi is still addressing the Knesset at this hour.

Arens Interviewed

TA1507171391 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1630 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by Eli Nisan at the Knesset on 15 July—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Excerpt] [Nisan] Mr. Arens, does the positive Syrian reply—which is how the Americans defined it today—open the door to a regional peace conference?

[Arens] As I have not seen the reply, I hesitate to say. If it is truly positive, that is, if Syria is indeed ready to launch direct peace negotiations with Israel, it is a very encouraging sign.

[Nisan] Mr. Arens, if the Syrian reply is indeed as positive as the Americans said it was, do you believe the ball will now be in the Israeli court and that Israel now must respond to the challenge al-Asad has presented to it?

[Arens] I think the ball stays exactly where it is at this moment, because if the Syrians are ready to conduct direct negotiations with us, there is no need to pursue the game of either soccer or basketball. All that is necessary is direct negotiations.

[Nisan] Does a Syrian reply acceptable to the United States mean possible American pressure on Israel to allow the United Nations a more significant role in the regional conference, when one is held?

[Arens] I am not a great believer in American pressure on Israel. The two countries enjoy strong, friendly relations, and there has been no talk of pressure on any of the sides in recent years. I foresee no change in this respect.

[Nisan] In view of the Syrian response, which was defined as positive, does Israel fear that the United States had given Syria commitments exceeding the U.S.-Israeli agreements?

[Arens] I do not know. If such commitments have been made, if the United States has provided clarifications in response to Syrian questions, I assume the Americans will advise us of any such commitments and clarifications, and we will then know precisely what—if anything—was agreed between these two countries. [passage omitted]

'Mistake' To Refuse To Talk

TA1507192591 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Defense Minister Moshe Arens has said that if it transpires that Syrian President al-Asad's reply to Bush's message is positive, we must sit down to talks with him. He added that no preconditions should be posed for such talks. Al-Asad should be able to raise every issue he pleases, including the Golan Heights, while we will propound our stands.

The defense minister further said that it would be a mistake to respond to al-Asad's willingness to launch negotiations by saying that we are unwilling to talk.

Our party affairs correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that Minister Arens made these remarks at a Tel Aviv convention of Jabotinsky Movement veterans.

Warns Against High Hopes

TA1607084991 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 16 Jul 91 p 1

[Report by On Levi]

[Text] "If it turns out that the Syrian president's replies to the U.S. peace initiative are indeed positive, and Hafiz al-Asad is really ready to sit down and hold direct negotiations with us, then the Israeli Government will have to respond favorably. We must make an effort to promote the peace process," Defense Minister Moshe Arens said last night.

He claimed that "the Syrian president will be able to raise any issue he wants in these negotiations, including the formula of territory for peace. Israel will express its position, and while we may not reach a compromise or an agreement, only through such negotiations will we be able to determine those things upon which we can and cannot agree. We are likewise prepared to sit and talk to the Jordanians and the Saudis, if they should prove ready to talk to us."

Appearing yesterday at a meeting of Jabotinsky Movement veterans, Defense Minister Arens proposed that we not indulge in too much optimism while evaluating the Syrian response and the prospects for a breakthrough toward direct peace negotiations. He maintains that "we must not entertain high hopes with respect to the peace process. It is a very slow process."

The defense minister believes that the Syrian regime has in fact not changed in essence, and that the country is headed by a despot who endangers world peace. The Syrian Army is the largest in the Middle East and the fifth largest in the world. Syria continues its race for more weapons and has been equipping itself with long-range missiles. It also possesses biological and chemical weapons.

Arens avers that "while the world's eyes were riveted to the Gulf and Saddam Husayn, al-Asad managed to complete his takeover of Lebanon. Syria has done to Lebanon what Saddam tried to do to Kuwait, except that in the case of Lebanon, the world has kept quiet. Appointments to the Lebanese Parliament are in fact made in Damascus and Lebanon is a Syrian province for all intents and purposes."

The defense minister added that he has warned the leaders of the Western world against continuing to sell weapons to tyrants anywhere in the world, and in the Middle East in particular. "My exhortations notwithstanding, and so shortly after the end of the Gulf war, all the weapons manufacturers are already competing over a slice of the Arab world's weapons market."

As for the Palestinian problem, he said: "For years, Israeli Governments have said that the answer to talks with the Palestinians should be negative, and that we are prepared to discuss the status of the population in the territories only with Jordan. I do not think we must insist on linking the population of the territories to Jordan. We must agree to talk to the residents of the territories about a temporary solution, after which a permanent solution will come. We must, however, continue to insist on refusing to talk to the PLO."

The defense minister determined that in the current security situation, and in light of the fact that the Arab armies are purchasing more and more weapons, we must continue to search for weapons that are newer and better than the enemy's. Thus, said the defense minister, he plans to appeal to the Treasury with a request for a supplementary budget. "We cannot confront our enemies with quantity. We rely on the quality of our manpower, but we must at the same time be sure that we provide it with weapons with a qualitative edge. We will have no choice but to go to the taxpayer and the government with a request that the defense budget remain untouched."

'Very Encouraging Sign'

TA1507122091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Defense Minister Moshe Arens says he does not believe the Americans will exert pressure on Israel in the wake of Syria's response to President Bush. Nevertheless, Arens emphasized, if Syria is indeed prepared to conduct direct negotiations on peace with Israel, such negotiations should be entered at once since this is a very encouraging sign. Minister Arens was speaking to correspondents at the end of a meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

Referring to Iraq's nuclear capability, Arens said the Iraqis are engaged in a multidirectional effort to attain nuclear weapons and not enough is being done to prevent them. Apparently we do not have sufficient information, Arens said, but I hope that in the present circumstances everything necessary will be done to

thwart Saddam Husayn's intentions. Arens' remarks were reported by our Knesset correspondent Ze'ev Kohen.

Netanyahu Sees No Concessions

TA1607060691 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by Hayim Zissowitz and political correspondent Arye Golan—live]

[Text] [Zissowitz] Good morning, Mr. Netanyahu.

[Netanyahu] Good morning.

[Zissowitz] Our political correspondent Arye Golan is here with me. The United States has already hastened to define the Syrian response as positive and a breakthrough in the efforts to achieve peace. Would Israel also be party to such a definition?

[Netanyahu] I cannot answer that question, of course, until we see the text of the Syrian response. We have not seen it yet.

[Zissowitz] As far as is known, their letter includes several concessions. Syria has agreed to a passive UN representative devoid of any authority, as the United States had proposed. Syria has apparently dropped its demand that the peace conference reconvene after the opening session. Would you now recommend that Israel show some flexibility during the talks next week, so as not to appear a nay-sayer?

[Netanyahu] First of all, you must remember that we have already shown great flexibility in making a series of concessions, while up to this moment the Arabs have not made any at all. Therefore, the problem facing us is, first of all, to ascertain whether the other side is willing to make any compromises.

[Zissowitz] Would you not term the Syrian reply a concession?

[Netanyahu] No. The response in itself is certainly not a concession. Someone writes you a letter and you reply. That is not a concession, that is an answer.

[Golan] Merely polite behavior, in other words.

[Netanyahu] I cannot tell you anything about the essence of the response or its components. The United States has declared that it was positive, and that is certainly encouraging; however, we would like to receive the details. This letter was five pages long, and I think it is clear to you that it is the entire letter, with all the details included, that makes up al-Asad's response. I also hope and believe that the United States will stand by the firm commitment it gave us that there will be no conflicting promises to the various parties or secret understandings and that everything will be open. Therefore, when the Israeli Government receives the letter, I will be able to give you a clear answer that is backed by the facts, something I cannot give you right now.

[Zissowitz] Does Israel have any reason to believe that the United States and Syria have indeed reached some secret understandings?

[Netanyahu] No, I only mentioned the matter because I think it is very important that during negotiations with any country—but certainly with an undemocratic, totalitarian country like Syria, whose leader, like Saddam Husayn, can issue moderate statements one day and even talk about peace, while at the same time be preparing for war or arming himself, just as al-Asad is doing these days with hundreds of new tanks and dozens of upgraded Scud missiles bearing chemical warheads with a threefold capability compared with those that landed on us during the Gulf War. [sentence as heard] There has been a contradiction between al-Asad's actions in recent months and his statements. In order to ascertain that there is no actual contradiction or, on the contrary, that there has been a real change in Syria's policy, we must have all the details and know that he is not talking out of both sides of his mouth or plotting something.

[Golan] You said that we have still not seen the Syrian response, but we have heard Brent Scowcroft say that the only negative answer now is coming from Israel. How should Israel act now?

[Netanyahu] I think that the truth is known. We have not issued a negative response to the peace initiative, because we were the ones who initiated the idea. We proposed the meeting with Syria, and I am telling you right now that if Syria has indeed removed all the obstacles and abandoned all the demands it had put in the way of the peace process, and if Damascus is really willing to enter direct face-to-face negotiations with us without any preconditions, then we are eager and ready to start at once. We have no problems with this, but the question is whether Syria has really lifted the obstacles.

[Zissowitz] Yes, there is also another question: the issue of the Palestinian representation. Do you think that Israel and the United States can reach agreement on the Palestinian representation to the Jordanian delegation, when Israel is no longer satisfied with the general definition that was originally proposed, that the Palestinian representatives will merely have to accept the framework of the peace initiative and declare their readiness to negotiate with Israel?

[Netanyahu] I do not want to get into the details of that question. This is something we shall undoubtedly discuss with the United States, and perhaps not just with it. Our major problem, however, is well known. We rightly fear one thing: We do not want to talk to those who wish to destroy us. What will we discuss with them, how to destroy us? In other words, as long as we are talking about the PLO, which has not for one moment abandoned its intention of destroying Israel, it will not be

logical for Israel to include elements from this organization who definitely do not want peace. This is the cause for Israel's concern, and it is a legitimate concern on which we will stand firm. As for the details of the matter, let us leave them to the talks with Secretary of State Baker, who will be here in a short time.

[Zissowitz] Thank you very much, Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.

Police Affairs Minister

TA1507155291 Tel Aviv Educational Television Network in Hebrew 1400 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Interview with Police Affairs Minister Roni Milo by Rafi Reshef—live]

[Text] [Reshef] Were you surprised by the Syrian response to President Bush?

[Milo] We had no prior knowledge of the contents of President al-Asad's letter. Although we have not yet received all the details, from what we know so far I must say that it contains certain elements that give rise to a certain measure of optimism. At the same time, we must be cautious and wait until we get the full details to ascertain whether it contains substantial elements and not just a new style.

[Reshef] Could you share with us the details that give rise to the optimism you just mentioned?

[Milo] I am being very cautious about what I say. I would like us all to be optimistic about making progress in the peace process. We all want it to proceed speedily and practically in the direction of peace. The way it sounds, al-Asad's response at least represents a positive style. As for the substantial issues, we must wait and see exactly what is involved. We must also see what the United States and Syria agreed to in the talks preceding the Syrian reply. As soon as we have the full picture, we will be able to make a more accurate assessment of whether this constitutes a true step toward peace.

[Reshef] You talk about piecemeal information as opposed to a full picture. How does this work? Where do we get our information? I understand that an official text of the Syrian letter has not yet been received.

[Milo] We get our information from the media, U.S. reactions, and other sources of information about the steps that preceded this letter. All in all, we could say that even if at this point we can only talk about a substantial change in the style of the Syrian approach, this in itself merits a positive reaction. For our part, we will examine any progress and every positive approach with all the constructive means at our disposal. As part of it, I would like to express my optimism and great hope that we are really making progress on the peace process.

[Reshef] Earlier in our program we heard MA'ARIV correspondent 'Oded Granot say that there are no free rides, that the Americans paid a price for this moderate Syrian position. They disagree with annexation, and accept the full text of UN Resolutions 242 and 338.

[Milo] As is known, the Americans may make commitments on behalf of the United States, but not on our behalf. We have our own interpretation of Resolution 242, which is a legitimate one. We have our own positions with regard to Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights, the Camp David accords, and autonomy. All these positions remain valid, and it is with these positions that we will come to the negotiations. Our objective is to arrive at direct negotiations without preconditions. Having said that, if the Syrians are indeed ready to enter negotiations not in an international conference but on the basis of the agreed-upon regional opening to begin serious and thorough negotiations aimed at advancing toward peace, I think there are definitely grounds for satisfaction here.

[Reshef] Minister Milo, you do realize that at the moment Israel actually remains the only one to have given a negative response or to have posed obstacles? Al-Asad and Shamir were being mentioned in the same breath until now, but in the wake of the Syrian response, Yitzhaq Shamir—meaning, the State of Israel—will find itself in an isolated position.

[Milo] I do not really know the basis for the thesis that Israel has given a negative response. Although the media have been harping on this version, this is not the situation in reality. I would like to remind you that upon emerging from his last meeting with the prime minister, the U.S. secretary of state made a very optimistic and positive statement about his talks. I am also confident—and I am not saying this only on the basis of my impressions, this is based on facts—that the Israeli state and government will do everything possible to encourage progress on the peace process and will enter talks....

[Reshef, interrupting] Mr. Milo, what practical steps should be taken now?

[Milo] The next practical step is to get the full text of the Syrian letter and position so that we can ascertain whether we will be able to make real progress on the process. At the same time, it is important to integrate Jordan into the process if possible, and it is also important to have a Palestinian delegation in these talks. If all these questions are settled—and I believe that in the wake of the Syrian response there is a greater chance than before—we will definitely be able to go ahead with the process proposed by Israel: namely, a regional opening in Cairo or elsewhere to be followed by direct and serious negotiations to arrive at peace agreements. I very much hope we will succeed.

[Reshef] In other words, you are far from feeling that we are in for a very tough time with the United States, one that will involve pressures. You believe that we will cooperate harmoniously.

[Milo] I think Israel's willingness to make peace is clear and unequivocal. We want to promote the peace process,

and that is why I see no reason for tension. There may be differences of opinion. Incidentally, we have had differences with the United States before on the question of Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, and there are other issues on which we differ. The underlying premise of our moves, however, is to make serious progress on the peace process in a bid to attain peace. I think we can reach an understanding with the United States and advance on the route we have paved. If Syria, Jordan, and other elements join in, the chances are good that we may attain this goal.

[Reshef] In other words, assuming we are not proved wrong and the Syrian letter indeed contains what we think it does, it will soon be announced that the practical process may start within the framework of a regional opening.

[Milo] If our proposals concerning the opening of the process and its continuation have been accepted by the Syrians, I believe it is a big step forward. I very much hope this is the case. As 'Oded Granot correctly noted earlier, I propose that we conduct ourselves cautiously and wait until we have checked the substance of the Syrian letter. Then we will definitely decide on the next steps which, I believe, could lead to a positive outcome if this indeed is the intention of the Syrians and other Arab elements.

Envoy to U.S.

TA1607070191 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Telephone interview with Zalman Shoval, Israeli ambassador to the United States, by Gay Zohar and Ya'el Dan—live]

[Text] [Zohar] Good evening to Ambassador Zalman Shoval in Washington.

[Shoval] Good morning to you.

[Zohar] Yes, we are just starting our day, but you are winding up the first day following the publication of the Syrian response to Washington. Was this an especially difficult day?

[Shoval] No. It was a normal day, but one can say that since yesterday, we have been in a state of readiness....

[Zohar, interrupting] One can also say that we have been in a state of readiness to absorb criticism.

[Shoval, continuing] Of course, things have become more intense since yesterday.

[Dan] Have we already moved from a state of readiness to being on the defensive?

[Shoval] No, we have not, because we have still not received the details. We know the general outlines of the Syrian reply; however, we will get the full details when the secretary of state arrives in Israel on Sunday.

[Dan] But it appears that an accusing finger is already being pointed at us. Scowcroft said that now Israel is the only one still saying no.

[Shoval] He did not say that exactly. He said that Israel has raised certain reservations or objections, and that is true. It should also be noted, however, that Israel has reached a very long series of understandings with the United States, and our reservations actually pertain to only a few points. We do not know exactly what the essence of the Syrian response was. We received a general impression and several details, but we must also go over the fine print.

[Zohar] The question is whether the impression is really as positive as the Americans say?

[Shoval] Look, they are presenting it in a very positive way; sometimes, however, beauty is more in the eye of the beholder than in the object itself.

[Zohar] If the Syrians really took a step forward and are willing to accept a passive UN observer, that is really a big move forward.

[Shoval] Well, you know what the Syrians did. First they demanded a conference under UN auspices, and then they dropped this demand and agreed, as it were, to a UN representative. Listen, the State of Israel and the Israeli Government wants to promote the peace process. When Mr. Baker visits Israel, we shall examine the various issues, and if the Syrian reply is compatible with Israel's insistence on the principle of direct negotiations without preconditions, then I assume that we can make progress; however, we will have to see about this when Mr. Baker arrives.

[Dan] At any rate, it now appears that the United States shares more points of agreement with Syria and more issues of contention with Israel. The question is whether there is room for Israel to reconsider its positions?

[Shoval] Look, I will give you a hypothetical answer to the first part of your question. Let us say that there really are fewer points of disagreement between Syria and the United States, then there is a possibility, at least theoretically, that one of the sides gave in to the other. Israel, at any rate, has its principled positions, and our attitude is known. When the government gets all the details, it will discuss the specifics.

[Zohar] Most of the analyses here in Israel say that al-Asad never makes concessions for nothing and that he may have reached some secret agreements with the United States—agreements which have not yet bee made public—regarding the future of the Golan Heights and some sort of U.S. commitment on this issue. Do you know anything about any secret U.S. commitment?

[Shoval] I know nothing of such a commitment, and we shall certainly ask this question when the U.S. team arrives in Israel. We are confident that the United States will not give and has not given any commitments of any

kind to one of the parties without Israel's being apprised of this, and we will definitely ascertain whether this has happened.

[Zohar] Mr. Shoval, one last question. Tomorrow you will have to confront the newspaper headlines and face an inquisitive media. What line is Israel currently adopting: that we are waiting for Baker's visit on Sunday?

[Shoval] Israel's line is clear. Israel certainly wants to promote the peace process more than some of its neighbors, but it wants the peace process to be an authentic process which must be based on direct negotiations. If the Syrians have distorted this principle in their reply, then I do not know what the chances of progress are. If they have not twisted this principle, and if the United States continues to uphold it, then we have reason to be optimistic.

[Zohar] We will be optimistic. Thank you, Ambassador Shoval.

Tehiya Party Sees 'Deadly Trap'

TA1607113891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Deputy Minister Ge'ula Kohen from the Tehiya and Gershon Shafat, chairman of the Tehiya Knesset faction, said that they trust Prime Minister Shamir to stand fast on Israel's positions as stipulated in his letter to President Bush, both with regard to the nature of the opening session and with regard to the participants in the conference.

The Tehiya officials asserted that the Arab demands with regard to these issues do not concern mere procedural matters but are a way to avoid direct negotiations in an attempt to lure Israel into a deadly trap. The Tehiya faction will meet with the prime minister before Secretary of State Baker's arrival in Israel.

Palestinian Leaders

TA1607085591 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 16 Jul 91 p 12

[Text] Bethlehem (ITIM)—Cautious optimism characterized the mood in the territories yesterday in response to Syria's announced agreement to a Middle East peace conference.

Bethlehem Mayor Ilyas Frayj said yesterday that Syria's response to President Bush is an important opening to advance the peace process. "The fact that the Syrians waited a long time before giving their reply shows that they weighed the American ideas seriously and came to the conclusion that there is no alternative to peace in the region," Frayj told ITIM.

Nevertheless, Frayj expressed concern that Israel would find a pretext to put off the peace conference, and said he hopes Bush and Secretary of State James Baker "will pressure Israel."

Stating that he hopes Israelis will decide in favor of peace, Frayj added, "The Arabs want peace on the basis of the territories-for-peace formula."

The chairman of the Arab Journalists Association, Radwan Abu-'Ayyash, a leading Palestinian figure in the territories, said yesterday that the ball is now in Israel's court. He expressed great optimism at the new chances for peace in the region and said he hopes the Syrian position will pressure Israel to respond to peace efforts.

While all East Jerusalem newspapers featured the Syrian acceptance in front-page headlines, most Palestinians on the street said they preferred to wait and see the reactions of the U.S. and Israel to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad's announcement.

"We've been hearing promises and hopes for a long time," said one prominent merchant in Ramallah, "but so far we haven't seen any substantive step on the ground that would indicate genuine chances for peace in the region."

[Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 16 July in a report by Dani Rubinstein and Eytan Rabin on page A2 adds that "speaking at Bi'r Zayt University yesterday, Sari Nusaybah said that 'although the Syrian reply promotes the peace process, the progress will only be temporary, because there is currently no chance of changing Israel's known positions.'"

The report notes that "all the Palestinian notables yesterday repeated the same demands and in a similar style. Ziyad Abu-Zayyad, from the village of al-'Ayzariyah in East Jerusalem, said that 'the United States must now put pressure on Israel.'"]

Arabic Paper Lists Points in Syrian Response

TA1507134191 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 15 Jul 91 pp 1, 15

[Excerpt] Secretary of State James Baker is expected shortly to visit the region to follow up the peace process in the aftermath of the positive Syrian response to the U.S. proposals. During this visit, Baker will call for a meeting between Israeli and Jordanian-Palestinian delegations in Cairo in preparation for the convocation of a regional conference.

AL-MANAR has learned that the Syrian response was conveyed to Washington by Damascus after being presented to Cairo, Amman, and the PLO and following contacts, meetings, and coordination among officials on the Arab side. The Egyptian president held a telephone conversation with the Syrian president prior to the delivery of the response to the U.S. Administration. It has been said that King Husayn and president Yasir 'Arafat will shortly visit the Egyptian capital to clear the air and jointly confront the coming challenges.

The Syrian response has proved what President al-Asad told Representative Wayne Owens—that Syria will not be an obstacle to the achievement of peace in the Middle

East. The Syrian response, as obtained by AL-MANAR, is represented in the following points:

—The United Nations should have a major role in the peace process and should be represented at the proposed conference.
—The conference should have the authority to reconvene.
—The Golan is Syrian territory, as underscored by Washington's guarantees and clarifications.
—The settlement should be based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.
—There should be active European participation in the conference. [passage omitted]

Levi to London; No Talks With Baker Planned

TA1607104891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi left for a three-day visit to London this morning. Our political correspondent Arye Golan reports that he will meet with British Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd and host a convention of Israeli ambassadors in Europe.

Levi will apparently not meet with U.S. Secretary of State Baker in London for a briefing on the Syrian response. The two men will meet only next week, when Baker comes to Jerusalem for talks.

Comment Urges Retention of Nuclear Potential

TA1507170891 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 15 Jul 91 p B1

[Commentary by Avraham Schweitzer: "Semi-Visible Stabilizing Factor"]

[Text] The reports and comments in the Israeli press about the meeting of the five members of the Security Council in Paris to discuss arms limitations may have been based on a misinterpretation of the concluding communique. The superpowers are aware of the slim chances of cutting the appetite of the underdeveloped countries, particularly in the Middle East, for modern military equipment. At the same time, the five are also aware of the need to cover up the measures that have been taken against Iraq—and those that will yet be taken—because of its drive to attain or develop nonconventional arms. They believe that if the ban were imposed on all the other countries in the region, this cover-up would work.

The interpretation given to the concluding communique of the Paris meeting portrayed the representatives of the five as either cynical or foolish. The representatives, as well as their masters, know full well that the arms exporters will not forgo their profitable markets. From their own experience during the cold war era, they also know that official and thoroughly supervised limitations notwithstanding, export bans can be bypassed. However, political circumstances, including the ongoing Iraqi crisis, oblige the superpowers to be on their toes. Moreover, the U.S. President has recently made some off-the-cuff statements about designing a new world order. What sort of order is it that enables any country, big or small, to threaten to use weapons of mass destruction, weapons that the superpowers have abstained from using to settle their own disputes?

In any event, Israel has no reason to be worried about the resolutions passed in Paris or about those to be made in the future, as was declared or implied at the end of the meeting. With its scientific and technological edge, Israel is less dependent on imports than its neighbors/adversaries. As for the implicit threat to confiscate stockpiles, the international community could hardly be referring to Israel, which has for 30 years evinced restraint (similar to that of the superpowers), and has not taken advantage of its military potency to promote its political and security needs.

Israel has never threatened to use its nuclear option, not even when its very existence was in jeopardy in 1973. The international community, headed by the United States (the superpower whose opinion on the matter carries weight), has apparently concluded that Israel's nuclear option is the main stabilizing factor in its troubled relations with its neighbors. At the end of the day, the nuclear option serves as a deterrent against an all-out attack on Israel by the Arab countries. By the same logic, it obviates the need for a preemptive Israeli strike to bring about tolerable strategic relations with its neighbors.

Arab strategists must have realized this and, whether it allayed their fears of not, it has prevented the apocalyptic wars Arab decisionmakers may have contemplated. In any event, Washington also must have realized as much. Otherwise, there is no plausible explanation for the United States ceasing to harass Israel about nuclear matters in the mid-1960's or its forgiving reaction to the bombing of the Osiraq nuclear reactor in 1981 (a move to keep Israel's monopoly on nuclear potential).

The way the nuclear issue has been handled is one of the outstanding success stories in Israel's policymaking. Those who were surprised to hear the prime minister say that, contrary to past positions, Israel is now prepared to contemplate regional arrangements on the issue, should find solace in telling themselves that either the proposal may have been as serious and sincere as the prime minister's statement about Israel's willingness to strive to establish peace in the region, or that members of the nationalist camp are sure to delay and preclude the execution of this declaration if anybody on the Arab side rises to the challenge.

As said, as far as the international community is concerned, Israel's nuclear potential does not pose any real

danger. This may be one of the reasons that we can look at what is happening around us with equanimity. Needless to say, upholding its sensible conduct on the matter—excluding Yitzhaq Shamir's statements—is a condition for the continued demure attitude of the international community toward Israel's (true or imaginary) nuclear status. This status and the acceptance of its existence are the ultimate guarantee to Israel's security.

A comparison may be drawn between Israel's nuclear status and the importance of the territories as a strategic asset. At best, the latter can work against infiltrating terrorists or primitive armies. On the other hand, the nuclear potential gives Israel the ability to withstand threats to its existence. That is how this potential should be regarded. Our first priority should be to retain this potential from here to eternity.

'Arafat Deems U.S. Peace Efforts 'Deceptive'

JN1507110491 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 15 Jul 91 p 18

[Excerpts] Amman—AL-DUSTUR—PETRA—At his office yesterday afternoon, Prime Minister Tahir al-Masri received state of Palestine president Yasir 'Arafat. [passage omitted]

State of Palestine president Yasir 'Arafat said his talks with the Jordanian prime minister took place to finalize ongoing discussions between Jordan and the PLO.

He added that these constant consultations take place to coordinate Palestinian and Jordanian actions at all levels, whether regarding political or bilateral issues.

On the developments in the region and the peace efforts, Mr. 'Arafat described U.S. efforts as deceptive; that is, they are not really peace efforts.

He told journalists that the U.S. administration wants to trade land for time, as Kissinger said, and not land for peace. They want to buy time so Israel can devour and Judaize the land and holy places.

Mr. 'Arafat arrived in Jordan at dawn on 14 July from Baghdad on his first visit to Iraq and Jordan since the Gulf war.

Mr. 'Arafat refused to reveal to reporters the purpose of his visit to Baghdad. He said only that he had no additional information to provide regarding his visit to Baghdad. He would not add anything else to what has been published in the Palestine News Agency.

Regarding the recent U.S. threats to use force against Iraq, Mr. 'Arafat said: I hope Washington will not perpetrate such an act.

Regarding Palestinian representation in peace negotiations with Israel, the Palestinian president reminded the United States of its agreement with the PLO regarding the form of Palestinian representation, and the PLO's role in designating the members of its delegation to negotiations which the two sides agreed on through the mediation of Swedish Foreign Minister Sten Andersson in July 1990 in Cairo.

A Palestinian official clarified that the agreement contained U.S. approval for the PLO to propose the names of the Palestinian figures who will negotiate with Israel over the future of the situation in the occupied territories. This means the United States inherently recognizes the PLO and its role in designating its delegation.

On Palestinian representation at the peace conference proposed by the United States, the PLO previously pointed out that there is no reason for going into detail about the conference as long as Washington is not serious about realizing peace and as long as the U.S. administration and Israel do not discuss the essence of the problem. Therefore, it is premature to discuss the subject of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. The PLO affirmed that it agrees to enter the peace process on an equal footing with the other delegations.

Mr. 'Arafat avoided a question on Palestinian representation. He said his discussions with Mr. al-Masri concentrated on the situation of the kinfolk in the occupied territories. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister 'Abdallah al-Nusur also spoke to journalists after the meeting. He said Mr. 'Arafat did not conclude his talks with Tahir al-Masri. The two sides did not discuss details; they discussed issues of mutual interest and peace efforts to put an end to the sufferings of the kinfolk in the occupied territories.

Dr. al-Nusur said Jordan has not received a request from the PLO to form a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, despite the fact that this issue is still premature.

Foreign Minister on Syrian Reply, Conference

Details of Reply Said Needed

JN1507174991 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1640 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Amman, 15 Jul (PETRA)—Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur, reacting to Syria's response to President George Bush's letter concerning the Middle East peace process, has said that the government has yet to read the Syrian response. In a statement to the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY, the minister added: The Syrian response must contain certain specific positions and possibly certain points unknown to us. When we know further details we will have a clearer position.

On the possibility of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker making a fifth tour of the region, Dr. al-Nusur said if the Syrian response to the U.S. proposals is positive, it is natural for him to come. He will find numerous questions waiting for him. This is in addition to an unclear Israeli line on the peace process and Israel's foot-dragging.

Baker's expected tour will be to clarify things, since the situation, as it stands, is not clear enough. This will make us wait until we hear more about the Syrian response, the thinking of the U.S. administration, and Israeli intransigence.

Asked about the implications of these developments on regional peace prospects, al-Nusur said: That depends on your perspective of peace; there is a difference between peace as a postponement of a fair and honorable solution to the problem and formal agreements that mean nothing, on the one hand, and real peace based on UN resolutions and a trade of territory for peace, which we welcome, on the other.

He stressed that peace based on foot-dragging, a disregard for basic facts, and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination on their soil will be an incomplete, worthless, and passive peace—a mere postponement of war.

On the extent of coordination among Arab parties on the peace conference, the foreign minister said it is inconceivable that such a momentous conference be convened without there being understanding and contacts among the parties. We therefore welcome coordination among the concerned Arab parties as something necessary and unavoidable.

Discusses Intra-Arab Issues

JN1607103291 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 16 Jul 91 pp 1, 14

[Report by Sa'd al-Silawi]

[Text] Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur has said that no peace conference whatsoever can be held in the absence of prior Arab coordination. He said Jordan supports joint coordination and fully opposes the lack thereof.

The foreign minister added that Jordan has always sought to achieve optimal inter-Arab coordination.

In response to a question on future Jordanian efforts toward a peace conference, Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur said that everyone is now awaiting the Syrian position and the U.S. position, which has recently been at a standstill.

In response to a question on a future meeting of the countries concerned with the Palestine question, the "frontline states," he said that such a meeting is desirable and that we are awaiting an answer to the question: Is there going to be a peace conference or not?

On Jordanian-Syrian contacts, Dr. al-Nusur said that our contacts with the brothers in Syria are continuing. They have not been halted, and God willing, they will not be. Our contacts and coordination are continuing on all issues.

In response to a question on the formation of a joint Jordanian- Palestinian delegation to the peace conference, the foreign minister said that this issue is premature. He wondered: A joint delegation for what?

Dr. al-Nusur added: If we in Jordan receive an unmistakably clear request for the formation of a joint delegation, we will be ready to welcome such a proposal. However, we have thus far not received any such request.

Answering a question on the future Jordanian diplomatic moves on the Arab scene, Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur said: Jordanian diplomacy will always remain active and realistic, and will continue to uphold what is right. Our diplomacy has nothing at all to hide. It is very clear. As for our principled positions, they will never change. Consequently, our moves will continue to revolve within this framework.

Dr. al-Nusur said: We do not deny that there is a crisis in intra-Arab relations. Jordan feels this crisis. This is something regrettable, yet real. This is not something we wanted. We want it to change soon, because it is very difficult to imagine sitting at the negotiating table to discuss a grand historic issue while you are not on speaking terms with your brothers. This is entirely inconceivable. Our diplomacy is active. It continuously seeks to unify positions and stands.

On Iraq's call for an emergency session of the Arab League, the foreign minister said: Thus far, we have not been officially notified of this call. Likewise, we have not received an invitation to this meeting.

On the escalation of the campaign of arrests and torture against Jordanians and Palestinians in Kuwait, and the stance of the Jordanian Government, Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur said that there has been a world clamor about this. He said there has also been a favorable response to what we said regarding what was going on in Kuwait. This response produced something. Martial court trials were canceled, and cases were referred to civil courts. Moreover, trials are being supervised. One more thing: To the best of our knowledge, there is no intention to expel people en masse. We have received unofficial information affirming that that there is no intention to expel people. We hope that this is true. If this proves to be true, this means that things have begun to proceed normally. Otherwise, the situation will become serious and will have to be viewed as a departure from all the norms and ethics cherished by mankind.

Dr. al-Nusur added: No doubt the intervention of the UN secretary general in this regard at Jordan's request is commendable. That is because his intervention was good. We also asked him officially to continue his intervention and pressure, especially since this war was waged in the name of the United Nations and also since the United Nations' moral and legal responsibility toward it is clear, not to mention the humanitarian considerations.

The foreign minister declared that Jordan will absolutely not receive any deportees from Kuwait who do not hold Jordanian passports.

On the threats to Iraq, Dr. al-Nusur said that Jordan has a clear position on this. He added: No Arab can accept or agree to see Iraq threatened with attack; nor can any Arab derive comfort from such a thing. To the best of our knowledge, Iraq is ready to submit the information requested in accordance with the UN Security Council resolution. This was announced by the highest echelons of the Iraqi command. Similarly, it was announced by the Iraqi representative to the United Nations. Consequently, we hope that all issues will be settled peacefully before the 25 July deadline expires.

In response to a question on the economic blockade imposed on Iraq and the Arab silence over this blockade, Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur said: The economic blockade harming the Iraqi people is unacceptable and is rejected. It exceeds the limits set by the UN Security Council. All UN Security Council resolutions speak of the liberation of Kuwait. This has been achieved. However, the allies'

demands have been changed into strikes at Iraq's capabilities. This has also been achieved. Are there any more demands? If what is demanded are statements on Iraq's nuclear endeavors, Iraq is making efforts to resolve this problem. Consequently, we no longer see any justification for this many-sided cruelty, which is unprecedented in history. As a people, we are in daily touch with Iraq. Our contacts continue. Our peoples are one. There are ties of marriage, blood, and kinship existing between the two peoples, not to mention our joint paths. We are aware of and saddened by the Iraqi people's sufferings. We also think that humanity is not sufficiently aware of the magnitude of the injustice being done to innocent Iraqis.

Israel Said Behind Possible New Attack on Iraq

JN1407150891 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 14 Jul 91 pp 1, 28

[Unattributed editorial: "Israel is Behind the U.S. Threats to Iraq"]

[Text] It seems that the United States is again exploiting the UN Security Council to justify its harbored aggression against sisterly Iraq. This is a clear attempt by the U.S. to destroy Iraq's defensive capability, thus preventing the Iraqis, or rather the Arabs, from possessing nuclear technology, even for civil purposes.

We doubt that destroying Iraq's defensive capability, or depriving Iraq of nuclear technology is a U.S. objective alone, especially since Israel would be the primary beneficiary, and the only winner in destroying a country capable of achieving a strategic balance with the large Israeli arsenal.

Therefore, we see this new U.S. campaign as merely the prelude to a possible new attack against the Iraqi people by the United States and its Atlantic allies, or by Israel itself, to restore the position of this strategic ally that was weakened by the Gulf war which also showed its fragility.

We would not be surprised if the United States were able to tame the UN Security Council, and make this important international forum a U.S. tool, especially against Iraq. We, however, would be very surprised if the Arab world remained indifferent to the developments of this new campaign, and unaware of the serious repercussions on this nation, if the United States or Israel launched a new war against sisterly Iraq.

Although we do not believe that Arab awareness would prevent the aggression, we believe that announcing Arab positions—even separately—denouncing the new threats against Iraq could absolve the Arab leaders of an historic disgrace that will haunt them forever if they continue this unexplained rejoicing over the misfortunes of Iraq, which has never hesitated to defend an inch of Arab land threatened by Israel.

To this end, we hope that the Arab countries that were not involved in the alliance with the United States and Israel against sisterly Iraq will adopt a collective position to reject the continued unjust U.S. campaign against the Iraqi people, denounce the continued economic embargo against Iraq, and condemn of any attempt to deal more death and destruction to a people who are still suffering from the effects of the aggression of 30 countries against a small developing country.

Security, Drug Talks With Syria Open

JN1507180191 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 0925 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Amman, 15 Jul (PETRA)—The Jordanian side, led by Brigadier General Nur-al-Din Khayr, public security assistant director for judicial police, and the Syrian side, led by Major General Muhammad Khaddur, director of criminal security, held a first round of talks during which they discussed bilateral relations and ways of bolstering these relations in the interest of the two peoples.

Discussions also dealt with bilateral cooperation in the fields of criminal extraditions and fighting narcotics in a way that would secure the success of efforts being made to curb this dangerous phenomenon, especially since the Syrian and Jordanian territories are used as drug transit routes from drug-producing countries to drug-consuming markets.

Interior Minister Receives Syrian Ambassador

JN1507182291 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1633 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Amman, 15 Jul (PETRA)—Interior Minister Jawdat al-Subul today received Syrian Ambassador Majid Abu-Salih. They discussed bilateral cooperation and looked into how it could be developed in the interests of the two peoples and countries.

Algerian Minister on Internal Situation, Lebanon

JN1207184191 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 12 Jul 91

[Interview with Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Ibrahimi by Salim 'Ali Diyab in Amman; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Diyab] Your Excellency Lakhdar Ibrahimi, now that the Algerian Government has won public confidence and the Algerian Army has been withdrawn from the streets, how is the overall situation in Algeria?

[Ibrahimi] I believe that the situation is calm now. The government wants to be able to carry out the duties that brought it to power. The first of these is the preparation of legislative elections as soon as possible in such a way as to satisfy as many Algerians as possible within a real national accord. This is the first duty. As for the second duty, although this is a transitional government, it is the

country's government and should seek solutions to economic, social, and other problems. The country's economic situation is difficult, and the government has begun facing the existing problems and seeking their solution.

[Diyab] Your Excellency the Minister, some reports say that the incidents that took place in Algeria were partly the result of foreign interference. What do you say?

[Ibrahimi] Undoubtedly, there are contacts between some elements of Algerian parties or organizations on the one hand and foreign sides on the other. This is no secret, and I believe that officials are not concealing it. I have no concrete evidence but there are reports about it. Weapons supplied by foreigners were seized, as you know, and there are confessions and testimony from the foreigners, who were captured while smuggling weapons into Algeria. They talked about relations with brothers in Algeria. The security and judicial organs are to assess the extent and nature of these contacts.

[Diyab] Now let us go to your mission in Lebanon while Algeria is facing special circumstances. What was the nature of the mission?

[Ibrahimi] It was not a mission, but an official visit to Lebanon by the Algerian foreign minister. We discussed topical issues. The one in Lebanon is the implementation of the al-Ta'if Agreement, including the deployment of the Lebanese Army everywhere, particularly in the south. Regrettably, this operation was coupled with, let us say, a misunderstanding between the Palestinian and Lebanese brothers. This was discussed directly by the Lebanese and the Palestinians. However, during our visit to Lebanon and after our contacts with the Palestinian brothers, we discussed the matter with the brothers there. The talks were, I believe, positive and constructive.

Daily: Embassy Employees Suffering 'Injustice'

JN0707081091 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 7 Jul 91 p 14

["Something" column by Fakhri Qa'war: "Unjustly Treated Jordanians"]

[Text] Our brothers and sisters who are working at the diplomatic and consular missions accredited to Jordan suffer from coercion and severe injustice. However, they cannot express their tribulations, because the price of every word of protest or objection will be heavy: namely, dismissal.

These brothers and sisters find no one to protect them from this injustice; there is no party to defend them, and no voice is raised on their behalf. This is despite the fact that the missions in Jordan should comply with the terms of labor that apply in the country, and should treat the Jordanian citizen out of concern for his full rights, such the annual pay increase, social security, emergency leave, official Jordanian holidays, religious holidays, and other rights.

However, most of these missions—I do not say all—force the Jordanian employee or worker to accept a formal contract as a condition for employment. Under the circumstances of the economic crisis and the exacerbating unemployment, the applicant is forced to submit and accept, hoping that in the future he will be able to adjust his situation. What is even worse than this is that the contract signed by the employee either circumvents any obligation to certain labor rights stipulated by the Jordanian labor law, or evades them altogether. The mission, for example, is not obliged to include its employees in the social security law, or cover the medical expenses from work-related illnesses or injuries. And the mission is also not obliged to issue severance pay at the termination the job for whatever reason. The employee has no right to ask for paid sick leave or to enjoy a paid annual leave. And the female employee has no right to a maternity leave; and so on.

This is only the tip of the iceberg. There are cases in which injustice is practiced on our brothers and sisters working at the diplomatic and consular missions in Amman. And this requires the official Jordanian competent quarters to intervene in order to protect them, lift the injustice practiced on them, and—at the same time—maintain their source of income.

I do not want to dwell on the missions' lack of respect for the working hours of the employee, or on depriving the employee of his right to demand an annual pay increase, or some of these missions' non-respect of employees' national and religious feelings—some of these missions interfere with the employee's choice of dress or religious rites—but I want to focus on this serious observation stated to me by an employee at a foreign mission. He said: The contracts stipulate that the employee at the foreign mission should show blind obedience, even if this is against his country's interest. As an example, he said that during the Gulf crisis, some employees of some embassies were asked to monitor the highways leading to Iraq in particular, write reports, and give a picture of Jordan's adherence to the decision to starve the Iraqi people. Other employees were asked to monitor the supply situation by visiting the wholesale market. Other employees were asked to circumvent Jordanian law in terms of customs, residence, and other fields. All this, the employee added, is requested from the employees under various pressures, including threatening them with loss of employment or depriving them of labor entitlements—all under the pretext that in carrying out these activities, they will not be viewed with suspicion since they are sons of the country.

These missions, of course, are protected by diplomatic immunity. This encourages them to disregard all considerations, including the courts' decisions. These missions also exploit the economic and living conditions in the

country and oppress God's worshippers among our brothers and sisters working with them.

We say that we, particularly the officials in the official departments, welcome and respect these missions. It is necessary for these diplomatic missions to treat Jordan fairly and respectfully. The Foreign Ministry and the Labor Ministry must jointly undertake the necessary measures to protect Jordanians from the injustices of the diplomats accredited to our country.

Swiss Government Grants $40 Million Aid Package

JN1507180991 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 15 Jul 91 p 1

[Text] Amman—SAWT AL-SHA'B—The Jordanian and Swiss Governments signed a grant agreement at the Ministry of Planning yesterday. Under this agreement, the Swiss Government will grant Jordan $40 million to finance an emergency program to invigorate the Jordanian economy and help in easing the negative effects of the Gulf crisis. This grant, like other grants offered for this purpose, will be run by the World Bank within the emergency project to invigorate the Jordanian economy.

The agreement was signed for the Jordanian Government by Planning Minister Dr. Ziyad Fariz and for the Swiss Government by its ambassador in Amman.

The Council of Ministers agreed on the signing of the agreement in its 2 July session.

Amal To Hand Over Weapons, Camp to Army

NC1507121691 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Statement by Minister of State 'Abdallah al-Amin followed by responses to questions from unidentified correspondents on 15 July; place not given—recorded]

[Text] I met with Minister Nabih Birri this morning. We discussed all the developments in all fields, especially the situation in the south and the continuing process of taking over over the heavy- and medium-caliber weapons from the brother Palestinians and placing them in the custody of the Lebanese Army. Minister Birri told me today that the Amal Movement has made a decision to hand over all its (?positions) and heavy-caliber weapons it has in Tuffahta camp and also to hand over this camp completely with all the weapons that are in it to the Army. This is a positive step by the Amal Movement that is added to the series of positive steps the movement has been taking in support of Lebanese legitimacy and the Lebanese Army.

We also discussed procrastination by some Palestinian groups in honoring their commitment to hand over their heavy- and medium-caliber weapons to the Army. Minister Birri will hold contacts in parallel with the contacts the ministerial liaison committee is holding in order to achieve a happy ending to this subject. We say that handing over the remaining weapons is a basic issue so that we may all embark on building Lebanese-Palestinian relations in a firm, clear manner within the framework of the Lebanese legitimacy and the Lebanese laws in force.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, how many arms do the Palestinians still hold?

[Al-Amin] The Army has lists of these weapons. Copies of these lists have been given to the Palestinian brothers. It appears that some of these weapons have not been handed over yet. Efforts are continuing and Palestinian figures and leaders are also holding discussions with some of the groups which have so far not honored the pledges they made to us during the meetings that took place in Sidon and Tyre.

[Correspondent] Is it true that the Army has addressed an undeclared warning to the Palestinians to hand over their weapons or else it will resort to force?

[Al-Amin] There are no warnings, but there is a cabinet decision and the Army is implementing this decision. The decision is clear; it stipulates that all the heavy- and medium-caliber weapons must be handed over. The heavy- and medium-caliber weapons are precisely defined. The medium-caliber weapons start from the RPG-7 and upward. Every act of procrastination in this matter will definitely affect Lebanese-Palestinian relations.

[Correspondent] Should this procrastination continue, would the government adopt any specific measures?

[Al-Amin] In such an event, the cabinet would study making appropriate decisions.

Weapons Remain in Camps

NC1607064291 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0445 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Contrary to what some statements suggest, the handover of the Palestinian weapons in Tyre's camps has become a very complicated issue. Both military and political sources in Lebanon have voiced fears that the situation will grow more critical and contacts will become more complicated under the current circumstances. The Palestinians are now insisting that the weapons that have been transferred from the camps represent their entire arsenal of heavy- and medium-caliber weapons. Lebanese military sources have affirmed that this is not true.

The Lebanese sources who have been following the situation do not rule out the possibility that the Palestinians are trying to compensate for their loss in the military confrontation in Sidon by making gains through political maneuvering in Tyre. These sources believe that if the ongoing contacts continue at their current pace, the issue of the camps' weapons will drag on much longer than is expected, because the PLO is trying to absorb the shock it received in the Sidon camps. The PLO has been persisting in raising the issue of civic and social rights before completing the handover of its weapons handover or meeting its own commitments and has begun to focus on raising the issue of UN Security Council Resolution 425 and the Army's deployment in the Jazzin area.

The sources also pointed out that the PLO has moved from a defensive to an offensive position and is making threats. This strategy became apparent in the news conference PLO intelligence official Kamal Midhat held yesterday, in which he violently criticized the Lebanese state, accused the ministerial liaison committee of procrastination, and threatened to start popular demonstrations in the camps to demolish the sand and barbed wire barriers. Midhat went as far as to say that the Army's actions against the camps have made their situation comparable to those of al-Ansar detention camp and the black ghettos in South Africa.

For the government's part, Minister 'Abdallah al-Amin has said that, according to Defense Ministry estimates, the Palestinians have kept two thirds of their arsenal in the Tyre camps. He added that the Army will continue to encircle the Palestinian camps as long as the medium- and heavy-caliber weapons have not been handed over. Al-Amin noted that every delay in transferring these weapons adversely affects Lebanese-Palestinian relations. He explained that the Lebanese Army has not set a deadline for the transfer, and affirmed that security measures around the Palestinian camps will continue.

We wish to recall a statement 'Abdallah al-Amin gave on 14 July in which he said that 95 percent of the Palestinian weapons had been handed over.

Muhsin Ibrahim, secretary general of the Lebanese Communist Action Organization, will leave for Sidon today to discuss the weapons issue with PLO leaders there. Last night Ibrahim met with Minister 'Abdallah al-Amin, who is a member of the ministerial liaison committee. In press remarks today, Ibrahim said that what happened in the south resulted from a lack of communication between the Lebanese Government and the PLO. He said that he cannot imagine that Lebanese-Palestinian relations will be free from tension, conflicts, or misunderstandings in the future unless a process of political normalization is carried out with the Palestinian people's representatives in Lebanon.

'Last Batch' of Weapons to Army

NC1607073491 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Excerpt] The Amal Movement handed over the last batch of its heavy and medium-caliber weapons at its center in Tuffahta, in al-Zahrani district yesterday afternoon. Among those present were Army representatives First Brigade Commander Colonel Ghassan Milhim, Colonel Rafiq al-Hajjar, and Amal representatives al-Haj Jamil Hayik, member of the Amal Movement's political bureau, and Abu-Hasan Qubaysi.

After the handover, a battalion from the First Brigade took up position in the movement's Tuffahta Center. Colonel Ghassan Milhim said that the Army's deployment in the south is a political move and that, by handing over their weapons, our brothers in the Amal Movement have expressed their confidence in ourselves, and in the Army command. [passage omitted]

Defense Minister on Weapons Handover

NC1607073891 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Defense Minister Michel al-Murr has said that Army units will continue monitoring the camps' entrances in Tyre until it has been determined that all weapons inside them have been turned over to the state. He added that Palestinian organizations have kept two-thirds of their weapons in al-Rashidiyah camp in Tyre and one-third of their weapons in 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp in Sidon. He called for the immediate surrender of these weapons.

Al-Murr denied that the Army has any intentions to enter the camps to search for weapons.

Fatah Official: Hundreds of Palestinians Detained

NC1507171091 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] In a statement to REUTER today, a high-level government official denied reports that Palestinian camps are under siege in southern Lebanon. Life is returning to normal, he said, and judicial authorities are releasing innocent detainees. Kamal Midhat, Fatah's intelligence chief, claims that hundreds of Palestinians are still being held in jail and that only a few civilians have been freed. He said that every Palestinian entering or leaving the al-Miyah Wa Miyah camp is interrogated and warned against what he called suppression and humiliation of the sons of our Palestinian people.

DFLP Calls for Release

NC1607102191 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0900 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Palestinian groups in Lebanon have expressed their concern about the Palestinian people in the Tyre camps because of the measures the Army has been taking.

A delegation representing the Palestinian groups has met with Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni. After the meeting, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) issued a statement emphasizing the need for all the detainees to be released, and for starting a dialogue on Palestinian civic and social rights.

'Awn Rejects French-Lebanese Agreement on Case

NC1507194891 Paris AFP in English 1931 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Beirut, July 15 (AFP)—Former Lebanese Christian military leader Michel 'Awn recently rejected an Franco-Lebanese agreement on his case, Lebanese Foreign Ministry sources said Monday. The issue of General 'Awn, who received political asylum in the French Embassy in Beirut nine months ago, has strained bilateral relations and several recent French visits to Beirut were involved in working out a solution.

Among the official visitors were Patrick Leclerq, director of the French Foreign Ministry's African and Middle Eastern Department and Middle East expert attorney Marcel Ceccaldi. The main sticking-point is Lebanon's demand that Gen. 'Awn repay 35 million dollars which he allegedly embezzled but which he says he received from his followers.

The plan proposed that the money demanded by Lebanon should be deposited in the Deposit and Consignment Office, a French public authority, the sources said. Furthermore, an arbitrator is to examine Gen. 'Awn's bank accounts in Lebanon, France and abroad and give a report on his findings within a month. The plan, which was approved by both nations, was finalized by Mr. Ceccaldi and presented in late May by Edgar Pisani, advisor of French President Francois Mitterrand and president of the Arab World Institute.

After long negotiations, the general only agreed to repay 5 million dollars, adding that he would submit bank guarantees for the rest. The Lebanese sources added that since

Gen. 'Awn "did not come to an agreement with the French envoys," "his relations with France are deteriorating."

French Official Departs

NC1607041691 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Patrick Leclerq, director of the French Foreign Ministry's North African and Middle Eastern Department, left Beirut for Paris this afternoon following a three-day visit to Lebanon during which he met with a number of Lebanese officials to discuss the normalization of Lebanese-French relations. Leclerq, who met with Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni and Prime Minister 'Umar Karami today, said that France wants to have a hand in rebuilding Lebanon. Reports indicate that Leclerq emphasized France's desire to have excellent relations with Lebanon and that he noted that France had supported the al-Ta'if accord and its implementation. The French official noted that France has units operating with the UN Interim Force in Lebanon and supports the implementation of UN Resolution 425.

Israelis Reportedly Shell Villages in South

NC1607065291 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] According to reports from the south, the villages of Yatar, Marwahin, and Zibqin came under bombardment by Zionist artillery from the enemy's Balat position at 1845 yesterday. The shelling lasted for several hours, and a number of citizens were injured, including Sham'un Qadduh, Jamil Minthir, and his wife. In a related development, Zionist combat aircraft overflew Sidon and its suburbs last night.

Further on Israeli Activity

NC1607120491 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Israeli occupation forces intensified their motorized patrols in the Marj 'Uyun-Hasbayya-Shwayya-Shab'a area this morning. Meanwhile, the agent militia fired a number of artillery shells and opened bursts of heavy-caliber automatic weapons fire at the liberated area north of Hasbayya from its Zummarayya and 'Ayn Qinya positions, causing fires that destroyed a number of olive groves in the Mimis sector. The Israeli occupation forces stationed in the Kawkaba hills searched the areas around their positions at dawn today after illuminating them with flares.

Al-Murr on Israeli Withdrawal, Syrian Deployment

TA1607085391 Ankara TRT Television Network in Turkish 1800 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Interview with National Defense Minister Michel al-Murr by Muzaffer Baca on the "A Look at the World" program; place and date not given—recorded in English and Arabic with superimposed translation into Turkish]

[Text] [Baca] You settled the Palestinian problem. Now you are faced with the question of the special security zone on the Israeli border, and the Jazzin problem. How do you plan to resolve these issues?

[Al-Murr] Our next move will be to deploy the army in Jazzin. The army is now 2 km from the special security zone. We have approximately 600 troops in Jazzin. We are trying to overcome the obstacles in deploying our army in the south with the help of certain friendly countries, especially the United States. We expect the support of these countries on the subject of the Israeli withdrawal from the special security zone. Israel must withdraw from the south unconditionally. It must implement UN Resolution 425. Previously, Israel had certain reasons. It was holding the area on the basis of the claim that Palestinians and certain terrorist groups were attacking Israel from this region. Now, with the deployment of the Lebanese Army in the region, we eliminated this excuse. Israel will no longer be able to claim that terrorist activities initiate in this region.

[Baca] You have a brotherhood agreement with Syria. Syria contends that through this agreement, it is contributing to stability in Lebanon. How do you view the future of your agreement with Syria? When will the Syrian units withdraw? Will they withdraw from your borders with Syria, namely from east Lebanon? What kind of initiatives have the Lebanese Government undertaken concerning this matter?

[Al-Murr] The Syrians are here because they are supported by the Lebanese Government. This is entirely our decision. We still need the support of the Syrian Army. The Lebanese Army was able to take control of the entire country on the basis of the Syrian Army's support. The Syrian troops are here within the framework of the al-Ta'if agreement. This agreement benefits us more than the Syrians. Lebanon conducts its communications with the Arab countries via Syria. Transit passage via Syria is very important for Lebanon. We need them, not vice versa.

Goulding Comments on Talks With Top Officials

NC1507200091 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Excerpts] Marrack Goulding, visiting UN under secretary general for special political affairs, met President Ilyas al-Hirawi this afternoon. The UN official said that efforts should be intensified to ensure Israel's complete withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425. The UN secretary general is ready to exert every possible effort in this respect, he added. [passage omitted]

Goulding, who discussed the situation in the south with President al-Hirawi and Prime Minister 'Umar Karami, said that he congratulated Prime Minister Karami on the

progress the Lebanese Government has made in the past few weeks. He said that his discussions with al-Hirawi and Karami touched on current ideas and meetings as well as future possibilities.

Goulding also met with Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni, following which he made a statement describing the Army deployment in the south as a very positive step and an important achievement.

Supports Deployment in UNIFIL Areas

NC1607122691 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Marrack Goulding, UN under secretary general for special political affairs, continued his visits with Lebanese officials today and met with Defense Minister Michel al-Murr. After the meeting, Goulding emphasized his support for Resolution 425's implementation and welcomed the Army's deployment on all Lebanese territory, including the area in which the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] is deployed.

Minister al-Murr said that the Army deployment is an important step considering what is to follow; namely, the implementation of Resolution 425. It has become clear to everyone that this resolution is supposed to be implemented unconditionally. Minister al-Murr said that the renewal of the UNIFIL mandate during the next six months is important because developments could occur making this renewal different from past experiences.

On the quantities of weapons the Lebanese Army has taken from the Palestinian camps, al-Murr said: The Army command has the precise figures, and the information organs in the south have presented their reports to the defense minsiter. He said that Ministers Shawqi Fakhuri and 'Abdallah al-Amin are concentrating solely on ensuring the Palestinians' social and civic rights.

Birri Rejects 'Routine' Renewal of UN Mandate

NC1607080491 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Minister Nabih Birri has rejected a routine renewal of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon's mandate, and stressed that the renewal must involve the restoration of all Lebanese territory to government control. He emphasized that the state is not demanding Jazzin, but is demanding the implementation of resolution 425. He called on the UN secretary general to send a special envoy to work out a timetable for implementing the UN resolutions on the south.

Meanwhile, sources close to Minister Birri have expressed their belief that the issue of the Palestinian weapons in the Tyre campswill be resolved within the next two days.

UN Secretary General's Envoy Arrives in Beirut

NC1607092191 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0845 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Edouard Brunner, the UN secretary general's personal envoy, arrived in Beirut this morning. He immediately left for the Foreign Ministry to meet with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz. Zafir al-Hasan, director general of the ministry's political affairs department, will also attend the meeting.

Senior Cleric Warns Against 'Zionist' Plans

LD1207190691 Tehran IRNA in English 1700 GMT 12 Jul 91

[Text] Tripoli, July 12 IRNA—A senior Lebanese alim here Friday called Arrogance's efforts to disarm the Middle East a "plot against Muslim states" and urged Muslims to keep their arms to defend their sanctities and identities. "The way [words indistinct] has adopted to disarm the Middle East is an indication of a big plot against Muslim states to turn them into protectorates of the Zionist regime," Sheikh Sa'id Sha'ban, leader of Islamic Towhid (monotheism) movement said. Sheikh Sha'ban, who was addressing a Friday prayer gathering here, also condemned Palestinian forces' surrender of arms to the Lebanese army as an "unjustifiable, compromising" move.

In related news from Beirut, another prominent Lebanese alim Allama Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah called for a worldwide Islamic outcry against the Zionist regime's plot to expand its realm. In his Friday prayer sermons to worshippers in southern Beirut, Fadlallah warned that the Islamic Middle East region would soon be trampled upon under the Zionist regime's boots unless a solution was found.

Response to Bush Places Israel in 'Tight Spot'

JN1607081591 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0330 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Peace: As the World Sees It and Israel Rejects It" the newspaper AL-BA'TH says: Syria has never deviated from its desire for peace. It has fought and struggled for the sake of peace. It has dedicated its resources to this cause. However, in return Syria refuses to be caught up in the trap of capitulation and rejects defeat since it represents the destiny of a nation and is the leader of a history which Arabs take great pride in.

The fact that Syria has agreed to U.S. President George Bush's ideas on peace in the Middle East is not a violation of Syria's firm policy, because what President Bush has proposed is what the world has been working for for a very long time. Israel alone has rejected and continues to reject what the world supports and what international law stipulates.

The newspaper AL-BA'TH adds: Peace is a demand for which we have sacrificed. We are ready to continue making this demand for a long time if Israel continues to reject it and defy the proposals, challenges, and intentions leading up to it. Peace alone is the key to the solution, since the alternative is destruction and death to millions of people. This can only please the Nazi chauvinistic mentality of the Zionist leadership.

Now, when the leaders of the greatest countries in the world are getting ready to discuss the basis and principles of international peace, they must ascertain the side that has been hampering and rejecting peace for more than 40 years. The leaders of the big powers, who promised to give the United Nations its role back, need to find out the reality of what Israel is and which side controls its (?decisionmaking). The world's most fanatic religious people are the decisionmakers in Israel. The most veteran terrorists in this century are ruling Israel, from Shamir all the way to Sharon.

The newspaper went on to say: When Syria affirms its pro-peace stand, it is thus placing the leaders of the big powers in front their responsibilities and is cutting off the Zionist claim that the Arabs are the obstacle to peace in the region. Since the first moment Syria approved President Bush's ideas, Shamir and his government have been cornered. The Zionist organs have started their war of deception. This is what the London summit needs to be alert to and overcome.

The newspaper concluded: Israel's leaders are confused and lost because their real enemy is peace. Now that Syria has declared its position and said what it has to say, the world and those seeking stability in the region have nothing left to do but put pressure on the rejectionist, belligerent side and give a just, permament, and comprehensive peace the effort, energy, and response it deserves.

On the same topic, the newspaper TISHRIN says: Leader al-Asad's message to President Bush, which contains Syria's response to the U.S. peace proposals, has generated much satisfaction, not only in Washington, but in various parts of the Arab homeland and the world. Militant figures in the occupied territories welcomed the Syrian response because of its positive effects on the Palestine question and since it puts Israel in a tight spot.

Here, we remind everyone that during the past weeks, Israel and the Zionist circles waged an organized media campaign against Syria with the aim of deluding world public opinion and covering up Shamir's stands, which reject peace, by conveying a false image of Syrian policy and presenting it as though it were the obstacle to a settlement.

TISHRIN continues: It has become well known to everyone that Israel's belligerent stand is the only obstacle to rendering peace efforts a success. Israel refuses to withdraw from the occupied territories; Resolutions 242 and 338 dictate its withdrawal from the occupied territories. Israel refuses to stop settlement-building and activities in the occupied Arab territories; the Security Council resolutions condemn Zionist settlement, demand that it be halted immediately, and consider Israel's measures to alter the character of the Arab land null and void.

The newspaper adds: Israel has rejected peace, withdrawal from the occupied territories, and Palestinian rights. It rejects the United Nations and its resolutions. It rejects the U.S. President's proposals, and will continue to reject anything that cuts it down to size and weakens its ability to aggress and expand.

If we view this analytically, we cannot be optimistic that the cards in its hand will fall and that its supporters will soon abandon it, because these sponsors were aware from the beginning of the problem, before the ill-fated Balfour Declaration was issued, that they were practicing an aggression, implanting a tumor within the Arab body, and establishing a racist state, which they serve and which serves them in return, exploiting them without being exploited in turn, except when this benefits its own interests and projects.

We are trying as best we can to avoid sliding into the den of fabrications being fed and cultivated by Zionism. Zionism also manufactures lies against Syria to drag it into that den and antagonize those capable of taking action against Syria. In this way, it realizes goals under international circumstances favorable to it, and under Arab circumstances that please neither friend nor foe.

Commentary on Israeli Obstruction of Conference

JN1307155191 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 13 Jul 91

[Unattributed station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: There is nothing more ridiculous than the enemy leader's talk about their desire for peace. Also,

there is nothing more astonishing than them accusing Syria of obstructing peace efforts. Political officials and observers all over the world would agree that Israel is the only party that has spurned all international efforts and placed countless obstacles in the way of convening a peace conference. In fact, Israel has translated its rejection of peace into concrete facts through Zionist settlements in the occupied Arab territories and feverish activity to Judaize and change the features of these territories prior to their annexation.

The whole world knows that the peace process in the Middle East first requires an Israeli pledge to withdraw from the occupied territories and give the Palestinian people the right to self-determination, away from any terrorism and suppression, and under international auspices.

Many international quarters, including the United States, which has made many contacts to start this peace process, have failed to extract an Israeli pledge concerning withdrawal and Palestinian rights. In fact, Israel has publicly and obstinately declared that it will hold on to the occupied territories to settle Soviet and other Jews. In addition, some Israeli leaders have called for the forceful expulsion of Palestinian Arabs to Jordan. Moreover, as a confirmation of its decision not to withdraw from these territories, the Shamir government has devoted the bulk of its budget to setting up settlements in the occupied Arab territories, particularly the Golan and West Bank. At the same time, the Shamir government has activated pressure groups in the United States and Europe, in addition to the so-called Zionist lobby, to secure tens of billions of dollars in aid to settle a million settlers in Jerusalem and the West Bank.

So how can Israel claim it is concerned if its practices are destroying the very foundations of peace? Syria sincerely and responsibly responded to peace efforts, following President George Bush's official commitment before Congress to achieve a just and comprehensive settlement on the basis of Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and the principle of territory for peace. Syria, as well as the Arabs, has demonstrated readiness to offer peace, while Israel has refused to return the occupied territories, and rejected the convening of an international conference under UN auspices and the participation of Europe and Security Council members. This is because Israel does not actually want peace and fears that the conference might put its expansionist and aggressive schemes on trial.

President Bush personally held the Shamir government responsible for thwarting peace efforts when he strongly objected to the settlement policy and considered settlements a major obstacle to peace. Likewise, Secretary Baker has not concealed the fact that peace in the Middle East is linked to the end of the settlement policy and the Greater Israel scheme.

Yesterday, Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens, who held lengthy talks with Yitzhaq Shamir and David Levi, said that all problems could be solved if Israel would sincerely respond to the peace efforts. He added that European economic cooperation with Israel depends on their approach to real peace.

Israeli leaders, however, do not pay any attention to Western, European, and U.S. advice. They believe that their first priority is to conduct settlement activity in the occupied territories and implement their expansionist schemes.

Israeli's talk about a peace conference without Syria is ridiculous because Israel denies the Palestinians the simplest of their rights, insists that it name the Palestinian delegation, and announces beforehand that the occupied Palestinian territories are an indivisible part of its aggressive entity.

First of all, Israel has not found any Arab party that will participate in a peace conference without the presence of Syria, without a clear, unambiguous pledge to implement international resolutions, and without a withdrawal from the occupied territories.

There is no doubt that to promote a just and comprehensive Middle East settlement, a stronger international commitment to enforcing UN resolutions is required. French President Francois Mitterrand was clear when he said in Tunisia that the international community is asked to implement the same criteria that were applied during the Gulf crisis. It is absolutely impermissible that the Palestine question remains unresolved and Israeli occupation continues unchecked.

President Bush also voiced his fear that U.S. credibility in the Middle East might collapse if the crisis remains unresolved. We would like to point out that the economic sanctions the world imposed on the racist South African regime, to which the United States and Europe were committed, has today borne fruit and all measures of racial discrimination have been abolished. It is time to impose the same sanctions on racist Israel to preserve peace in the region and the world, and to save the international community, its cohesion, and credibility from an inevitable collapse.

Khaddam, Al-Shar' Meet UN Envoy, Discuss Plan

JN1507150091 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] At 1200 today, Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received Edouard Brunner, the UN secretary general's special envoy. Talks during the meeting revolved around the situation in the region and the mission entrusted to Mr. Brunner by the UN secretary general.

This morning, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' also received Mr. Edouard Brunner. Also present at the meeting was Dr. Najdi al- Jazzar, head of the International Organizations' Department at the Foreign Ministry.

During the meeting, talks revolved around the international efforts being exerted to find a just and comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Viewpoints were identical regarding the importance of the UN role in the peace process to implement its resolutions on this question, which are based on the principles of international legitimacy. They also reviewed Israel's stand, which rejects the UN role in the peace conference, and the implications of this stand, such as blatant defiance of the international organization, one of whose resolutions give Israel its existence in the first place.

Egyptian Trade Minister Arrives, Makes Statement

JN1407170691 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1602 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] Damascus, 14 Jul (SANA)—At noon today, Dr. Yusri Mustafa, Egypt's minister of economy and foreign trade, and his delegation arrived in Damascus on a several-day visit.

On hand to welcome him at the airport were Economy and Foreign Trade Minister Muhammad al- 'Imadi and Mr. Bashshar al-Akhras, assistant minister of economy and foreign trade, and Syrian Central Bank Governor Muhammad al-Sharif, as well as the Egyptian consul in Damascus.

Upon his arrival, Dr. Yusri told SANA that his visit to Damascus is to attend sessions of the preparatory committee for the Higher Joint Syrian-Egyptian Committee and to review the progress made in bilateral agreements in all fields.

He will also explore the possibility of a new bilateral trade pact and look into ways to further cement relations between the two sisterly states in all fields.

Meets With Al-Zu'bi, Al-'Imadi

JN1507181291 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] At 1200 today, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi received Dr. Yusri 'Ali Mustafa, Egypt's minister of economy and foreign trade. Dr. Muhammad al-'Imadi, minister of economy and foreign trade, and the Egyptian ambassador in Damascus attended the meeting.

The Egyptian minister conveyed greetings from Egypt's Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi to Mr. al-Zu'bi. They explored the prospects of developing economic ties and talked about meetings of the Higher Joint Syrian-Egyptian Committee set to open in Damascus tomorrow and chaired by the two countries' prime ministers. They also discussed the topics for these meetings in the interest of further coordination and cooperation between the two sisterly countries.

Afghanistan

Mujahidin Kill 15 Kabul Soldiers in Farah Province

BK1407121091 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] In Afghanistan, mujahidin are reported to have killed 15 Kabul regime troops during an attack near Shindand Airport in Farah Province. They destroyed two bunkers of the Kabul regime and seized a large quantity of arms during the attack. Four mujahedin were martyred and five others injured in the battle; and during attack at Orgun in southern suburbs of Herat, four Kabul troops surrendered to the mujahidin, while others fled away leaving behind their arms.

45 Kabul Casualties Claimed

BK1507154791 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Reports say the mujahidin in Afghanistan have either killed or wounded 45 Kabul regime forces in separate attacks at Lowgar, Meydan, Vardak, and Kabol Provinces. Mujahidin used heavy artillery in these attacks and captured a number of security posts and a large quantity of arms and ammunition. They also attacked positions of the Kabul regime forces at Zarghun Shahr, (Dadukhel), and (Wasarat) as well and inflicted heavy damages to the Kabul forces.

Extremists Killed During 'Serious Clashes'

LD1507213991 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1430 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Rivalry and hostilities among the war-mongering extremist groups arising from the distribution of goods stolen from the people and internal discord among them, which mainly cause clashes and mass killing, intensifies every day.

A correspondent from the BAKHTAR military section reports that during the last week, serious clashes took place among the extremist groups of Golboddin and Khales; and Jamiat, Harak and Mahaz Meli formations in some parts of the provinces of Helmand, Qandahar, Badakhshan, Kapisa and Paktia. So far, 430 persons from the sides involved in the fighting including Saranwal Abdul Manan, Mohammad Zaman and Mula Padsha, ringleaders of the extremist groups of Golboddin and Khales, were killed. Another 246 including Mosafer, Sofi and Sadullah, ringleaders of the Golboddin group were injured.

Also in the course of these clashes 20 persons were captured by the rival groups and another 21 of them are missing. The report adds that as a result of these clashes, during which the factions used heavy weapons and missiles against each other's positions and centers, eight weapons, food, clothes depots and two vehicle carrying arms and ammunition were destroyed. The report adds that a number of the local people in those regions including women, children and elderly people were martyred and have suffered considerable financial loss.

Bangladesh

Finance Minister Briefs House on Currency Adjustment

BK1507122791 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 10 Jul 91 p 1

[Text] Finance Minister Mohammad Saifur Rahman told the Jatiya Sangsad Tuesday [parliament 9 July] that the last time Bangladesh currency was devalued was on July 2, reports BSS. [Bangladesh New Agency].

He was replying to a question from Prof. Rafiqul Islam (AL [Awami League]—Jessore).

Raising a supplementary Prof. Islam wanted to know from the Finance Minister as to why the present Government devalued the currency within so short a time of its coming to power and when the Jatiya Sangsad was in session. He also wanted to know from the Minister whether this devaluation was the outcome of any extraneous pressure. Mr. Saifur Rahmain told the House that BNP [Bangladesh Nationalists Party] Government was a nationalist Government and it never submitted to any pressure.

He said Bangladesh currency was adjusted with dollars but not devalued.

Mr. Saifur Rahman said it was an accepted norm that currency was adjusted for maintaining rationality, international trade and interaction of different currencies.

Besides adjustment was also necessitated in the interest of import, export and investment, he added.

Citing an example, the Finance Minister said our neighbour, India, had adjusted its currency twice in two days by 20 per cent. He said each and every country adjusts its currency in its own interest.

Mr. Saifur Rahman said adjustment or devaluation of Indian currency had made adverse effects on our economy. Besides, he said, it was also done to attract the Bangladeshis living abroad to send their remittances directly.

He said for a long time dollar had been accepted as intermediary currency for Bangladesh. He said rise and fall of dollar value necessitates adjustment with our currency.

The Finance Minister said the rate of adjustment was made on the basis of various economic principles of the country.

Saudi Arabia To Give $106 Million for Rebuilding

BK1407155991 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] Saudi Arabia is to give Bangladesh $106 million as grant for reconstruction of the infrastructure devastated by the cyclone and tidal surge. A memorandum of understanding to this effect was signed in Dhaka today. The Saudi grant will be utilized for eight projects. Under these projects, multipurpose buildings will be constructed to accommodate schools, mosques, and clinics, which can also be used as shelters during any natural disaster. The grant money will also be used for construction of houses, reconstruction of two telecommunication towers at Chittagong and microwave telecommunications links at Begunia in Chittagong, supply of drinking water, reconstruction of food storage, storage godowns, import of fertilizer, restoration of electricity transmission line, and reconstruction of embankments in the coastal areas. ERD [External Resources Division] Secretary Enam Ahmed Chowdhury and Deputy Managing Director of Saudi Fund for Development Dr. 'Abd al-'Aziz Mohammad al-Turki signed the memorandum of understanding.

India

Prime Minister Wins Vote of Confidence

BK1507144291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] The Narasimha Rao government has won the vote of confidence in the Lok Sabha. The voting was by a division at the end of a marathon two-day debate. Two hundred and forty one members voted in favor and 112 against.

Replying to the debate, the prime minister made it clear that the approach of his government is that of consensus as the people's mandate has been in favor of it. He said the days of massive majority by a single party are over and the people want us to run the government through consensus, not go to them for elections. Mr. Narasimha Rao said his style of functioning will be to seek areas of agreement and not to ride roughshod even when consensus eludes sometimes.

Rao Makes Statement on Win

BK1507163891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Excerpts] The Congress-I government at the center has won the vote of confidence in the Lok Sabha. The voting was by division at the end of a two-day debate with 241 members voting in favor and 111 members against. One hundred and twelve members abstained from voting.

Replying to the debate, the prime minister said his government's approach is one of consensus as the people's mandate also favors such an approach. Mr. Rao said the days of massive majority by a single party are over and the people want the government to be run through consensus without going in for another election. He said he would seek areas of agreement and ride roughshod even when consensus will elude.

Defending the measures taken for reforming the economy, the prime minister said he had taken the opposition leaders into confidence within four days of forming the government. He admitted that he did not apprise them of the move to adjust the exchange rate of the rupee or to send gold outside as such decisions cannot be anticipated in advance. He refuted the opposition criticism that the government is coming out with piecemeal measures on economy and said that all these issues have been debated for quite some time, though the decisions have been left to his government. Mr. Narasimha Rao said the previous government, for obvious reasons, could not take decisions on all these matters.

The prime minister said the industrial reforms will be announced in a couple of days to deregulate the economy at our own pace and to welcome foreign investment on our terms. He said the government has absolutely an open mind and will welcome any new idea but the changes that are sweeping the world cannot be ignored.

Mr. Narasimha Rao asserted that whatever steps are taken they will be in keeping with the prestige of the country and not against its interests or against the Congress-I manifesto. Mr. Narasimha Rao informed the house that as a result of the measure taken by the government, nearly a 100 non-resident Indians have written letters extending their full support and showing inclination to invest money in the country.

Reiterating the government's commitment to the cause of the poor, the prime minister said the public distribution system is being revamped to ensure that essential commodities reach the people at the grassroots level. He said finishing touches are being given to the new package and will be placed before Parliament during the current session.

Turning to political issues, Mr. Narasimha Rao said as a matter of propriety, he did not want to initiate any process before winning the vote of confidence. This, he said, does not mean that the goverment has not done its homework. He said he will begin consultations with political leaders from tomorrow on all problems which had been defying solutions.

Clarifiying the Assam government's decisions on granting amnesty to ULFA [Assam Liberation Front of Assam] militants, the prime minister said this is in line with the preelection promise of the chief minister, Mr. Hiteshwar Saikia. He said this however, does not mean that the general amnesty has been given for securing the release of the kidnapped persons. Mr. Narasimha Rao pointed out that the local units of various parties, including those at the national level, have welcomed the decision taken after an all-party meeting held by the

chief minister. He appealed to the members not to draw any hasty conclusion and allow the Assam government to handle the situation.

Earlier, the resumed debate was marked by heated exchanges between the treasury benches and the opposition members as also between the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and the National Front and Left Front Combine on various issues like Ram Jamabhoomi Babri Masjit [Ayodhya shrine] dispute and implementation of Mandal Commission [to reserve jobs for members of lower castes] report. [passage omitted]

Our Parliamentary correspondent reports the electronic voting machine was not put to use today as members have not yet been alloted their division numbers. The voting by distribution of slips took more than 30 minutes and as the speaker announced the result, several members walked up to the prime minister and warmly complimented him.

LTTE Member Confesses to Gandhi Killing

BK1407095091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] In Sri Lanka, a Central Committee member of the People's Front of Liberation Tigers, a political wing of the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] is reported to have confessed to the Indian authorities that LTTE was responsible for the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Reports in Colombo say the member seeking anonymity has written a letter disclosing the news to the Indian Government. He said the Central Committee met at the LTTE headquarters at Kondavil in Jaffna today after the assassination to discuss the political situation arising out of the assassination.

39 Pakistani, 37 Indian Prisoners Repatriated

BK1507160191 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Repatriation of some Indian and Pakistani prisoners took place at the international border checkpost at Wagah in the western sector today. Our Amritsar correspondent reports that 39 Pakistani citizens were handed over to their country's representatives by the Indian authorities. Pakistan repatriated 37 Indian citizens. The repatriated were lodged in different jails of India and Pakistan for illegal border crossing and overstay.

Hostages Released After ULFA Supporters Freed

BK1407015491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0035 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] In Assam, ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] has released two hostages. They are the additional commissioner of Darrang District, Mr. M.M. Das; and another official of the commissioner's office, Mr. Harishwar Sharma. Their release came after 24 persons arrested under the terrorist and disruptive activities act were set free. While 11 of the 24 ULFA activists were released on Friday [12 July], the remaining 13 were set free yesterday after securing court orders. The ULFA had made the release of all 24 persons a precondition for setting free three hostages, including Mr. Das and Mr. Sharma. The third is expected to be released shortly. Mr. Das and Mr. Sharma, who were released last evening, were among the 15 kidnapped persons whom ULFA took hostage on the first of this month from various parts of Assam. Two others were set free earlier while a Soviet engineer was killed in a scuffle with his abductors. As already reported, two more persons have been kidnapped from different places in the state. No one has so far claimed responsibility for these abductions.

Reportage on Kidnappings and Releases in Assam

Two Kidnapped in Assam

BK1307084291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 13 Jul 91

[Text] In Assam, two more persons have been kidnapped. According to official sources in Guwahati Mr. Naresh Kumar Saxena, a shopkeeper of Dhalgaon of Bongaigaon District, was kidnapped by some unidentified abductors. The second person is Mr. Alakankeshwar Deka of (Pathshala) town in the (Perpeta) District. No one has so far claimed responsibility for the act which was carried out last night.

Meanwhile, a court has ordered the release of 13 more persons detained under the terrorist and disruptive activities act. With this, action has been taken for the release of all the 24 detainees listed by the ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] in its second list. The ULFA says only three hostages namely, Mr. M.M. Dutta, additional deputy commissioner of Darrang District; his assistant, Mr. H. Sharma; and a telecommunication engineer, Mr. Dashrath Pandit will be released in exchange for 24 of its supporters.

Another Hostage Released

BK1407160291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] In Assam, the ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] released Mr. Dasharath Pandit, telecom engineer of Jorhat at Golaghat this evening. According to police sources, Mr. Pandit was released by ULFA 1 km away from Golaghat police station from where he came walking to the police station at 1910. He is stated to be in good health. Mr. Pandit is the third hostage released by the ULFA in exchange of 24 of their members detained in different jails. Yesterday, two hostages—Mr. M.M. Das, additional deputy commissioner, Darrang; and his confidential assistant, Mr. Harishwar Sharma—were released by the ULFA.

Activists Demand Release of All Detainees

BK1507155691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] In Assam, the ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] has again demanded the release of all the detenus [detainees] in exchange of two ONGC [Oil and Natural Gas Commission] engineers—Mr. Krishna Paul and Mr. T.S. Raju—setting a new deadline at 1800 on the 26th of this month.

Meanwhile, an official spokesman disclosed at Dispur that the government has so far released 242 ULFA detenus in view of the general amnesty recently announced. The spokesman said that 390 applications have been moved so far in the court for the release of ULFA militants. He said the court had given approval to 358 applications till yesterday.

New Forces Threatens To Kidnap ULFA Relatives

BK1507124891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] A new underground force called Jatiya Mukti Bahini of Assam—JMBA—has threatened to kidnap the relatives of ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] militants, if the remaining hostages are not released immediately. According to a UNI [UNITED NEWS OF INDIA] report, the JMBA president, Mr. Heramba Ojha, in a statement in Guwahati said the terrorist activities of ULFA and their atrocities on innocent people has forced his organization to take remedial measures.

Congress-I Youths Demonstrate at Pakistan Embassy

BK1607050891 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Activists of the Punjab Youth Congrees-I held a demonstration today in front of the Pakistan Embassy in New Delhi. They were protesting against Pakistani interference in India's internal affairs. The demonstrators alleged that Pakistan is fomenting trouble in Punjab and Kashmir by supplying arms to militants. Later, the demonstrators presented a memorandum to embassy officials.

Pakistan Airlines To Restrict Indian Travelers

BK1507160791 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] The Pakistan government has instructed the Pakistan International Airlines to confine Indian passengers who do not possess transit visa within the airport premises. Agency reports, quoting interior ministry sources, said that this was decided at a high-level meeting in Islamabad recently.

Lawmakers Hear Minister on Gold, Trade Deficit

BK1607091891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] The Rajya Sabha has been informed that the government is not in a position to bring back 20 metric tons of confiscated gold leased to a Swiss bank in view of the difficult balance of payments position, foreign exchange reserves, and the trade deficit. This information was given by the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, in reply to a question by Mr. A.G. Kulkarni and Mr. Ratnakar Pandey of the Congress-I. Dr. Singh said he would try to get it back in view of the people's emotional attachement to gold, but admitted that at present he is not in a position to do so.

The finance minister said the Reserve Bank of India [RBI] transported 34.8 metric tons of gold to the Bank of England earlier this month. He said the RBI has borrowed from the Bank of England 572.3 crore rupees against the gold.

Dr. Singh said the decision about the two gold transactions is an extraordinary measure resorted to correct the balance of payments position and a part of foreign exchange reserve management policy. He said this last resort taken after considering all options was also to ensure that the country can maintain its unblemished record of meeting its international obligations.

Iran

Rafsanjani Sermon on Freedom of Speech Viewed

NC1407072891 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0348 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Commentary prepared by the Central News Unit's Research Group]

[Text] In the name of God. During his Tehran Friday Prayer sermons, our President, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, referred to important world problems as well as to major domestic problems and namely to the limits of the freedom of speech and pen. It should be noted that the enemy always has been and is trying to create havoc, and world arrogance and international capitalists are against Islam and the Islamic Revolution with all their might and want to deal blows to it.

The enemy has suffered a heavy blow from Islam and from the revolutionary Iranian nation, and its interests have been threatened. Our nation has shown all the nations and especially the world Muslims the way to confront arrogance and the camp of the enemies of humanity. Thus, in order to confront the wave of the movement that our nation has created, the world's hegemonistic powers are trying to inflict blows on the Islamic Revolution and to throw the Iranian nation out of the picture.

Under such circumstances and with the existence of such proof, the need for alertness toward such acts is very clear and expected. The people's alertness under the current circumstances—that is, the era of reconstruction—is one of the elements of their victory over evil. Also, alertness on discordant movements is extremely necessary.

It should be noted that defamation and discord always have been the common methods used by discordant and infiltrating elements, which take up positions behind one person or another with the intention of fulfilling their satanic objectives. We have all witnessed how at some junctures of the revolution they have used this weapon successfully. They have even exploited the naivete of some renowned figures and placed them opposite the Imam and the values of the revolution. This is a danger that has always existed and continues to exist; and the least bit of inattentiveness can lead to similar situations and place some unwillingly in a confrontation against the people and the revolution.

It is a source of great regret that some resort to the labels of revolution and revolutionaries and of fighting against the United States and overtly pour oil over the fire of the enemies by saying and writing whatever they want without discerning interests. Sometimes the venom of their words and their pens is more than the venom shed by the foreign mass media. The outcome of what they do without considering the sensitive conditions of the country and the revolution is only to spread discord between the people and the country's officials. In relation to this, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i has stated: The disillusionment of the people toward the officials and the system is treason, and I will not tolerate its continuation.

It should be noted that in each society there is freedom of speech and the press as long as it does not harm the freedom of others, when it is based on ethical, religious, and social principles and norms, and when it conforms with what is good for the society. The press and the press critics who are seeking freedom of speech should propound criticism from social and public stands and not from specific factional stands. Thus, many believe in the importance of the art of writing and the elevation of it outside political factions and criticisms in the newspapers and other media. Also, freeing the mass media from penpushing and elevating the level of thought also are important points.

The press can solve many of the problems of the society and government and turn into a strong and useful arm to help the system. Healthy criticism and the publication of truth in the mass media, especially in the press, can overcome many weak points and further strengthen strong ones. It can make people more active and overcome misunderstandings, compensate for shortcomings and iniquities, and make the society's movement more healthy. Helping the government in solving problems depends on the correct publication of facts and the clarification of the government's policies.

The government definitely is facing problems in the implementation of its social, economic, and cultural programs. But only referring to problems and propounding general solutions without propounding a specific and effective solution does not overcome problems and leads instead to mistrust and anxiety among the various sectors of society.

On the one hand, in serving the government and helping it solve its problems, a correct assessment of problems and the outcomes envisaged by the government is a basic step toward elevating public knowledge on the government's plans. For example, if it is clarified for the people that in order to make the country's economy flourish, the export of goods—despite the problems that it faces inside the country—enjoys a special position and is a basic step toward the growth and expansion of national economy, this will result in further cooperation between the people and the government.

The press and other mass media have an immense mission to inform the public, and respecting the limits of publicity and safeguarding the respect of individuals are among the important musts.

Larijani Discusses Limits of Freedom

NC1507203391 Tehran RESALAT in Persian
3 Jul 91 pp 1, 16

["Part one" of editorial by Dr. Mohammad Javad Larijani, Foreign Ministry adviser: "Freedom and Leniency"]

[Excerpts] For those who worship freedom there is nothing more suspicious or dangerous than the following statement: "We reject absolute freedom; we want limited and controlled freedom." Who wants absolute freedom? Absolute freedom is the same as government abrogation and is anarchy.

No one has mentioned absolute freedom in any part of the world in the course of more than 2,000 years of political thought! In fact, freedom in itself is a peripheral issue; the real issue is what is known as social leniency. However, absolute leniency and controlled leniency also have far reaching and deep-rooted meanings.

In order to understand the difference between these two concepts, we should note a thought in political philosophy: Why are men worried about government? The politicians of the world are divided into two groups on this subject.

A large group believes that the greatest evil that can afflict a government is despotism and egocentricity. They believe that if this root of all afflictions is cured, other woes will be cured as well. [passage omitted] The other group believes that the greatest obligation of a government is to guide the people toward what is seen as their "interests." This group sees the greatest vice of a

government as "corruption," not mere egocentricity or "destructive despotism." The root is "corruption" itself. [passage omitted]

Continuation of Editorial

NC1507210591 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 4 Jul 91 pp 1, 16

["Part two" of editorial by Dr. Mohammad Javad Larijani, Foreign Ministry adviser: "Freedom and Leniency"]

[Excerpts] Every political system incorporates some sort of social leniency and assumes a certain standing based on that particular form of "freedom." [passage omitted]

Therefore, complete leniency is one of the most important requirements of a democracy and manifests itself in various forms and areas such as activities of parties, the parliamentary system, the economic system, and "freedom of the press." A rejection of complete leniency, therefore, would entail a different system in all the areas.

In a system which revolves around correct values, speaking and writing, like all other issues, has a moral aspect and a corrupt aspect. A legitimate government has to combat the corrupt aspect. The campaign against all forms of corruption, however, depends on that particular vice and is based on the system's overall efficiency.

Speaking and writing are extremely beneficial to the system if the objective is the forging of a particular political trend. [passage omitted]

We should not forget that the most horrifying dictatorship of the century, whether we are talking about Stalin or Hitler, came to power riding the slogans of "the people" or the "word of the people" or the "rule of the people!" We should not forget that nothing can replace "truth" and "reality" and every word, thought, or deed that does not see itself bound by the limits of truth is corrupt, dangerous, and false. This is the main principle on which the rule of the velayat [velayat-e faqih—rule by the supreme jurisconsult] is based.

Rafsanjani Addresses Clergy on Resources, Wealth

LD1307193791 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 13 Jul 91

[Excerpt] Today, the first day of Moharram, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani commemorated the month of the victory of blood over the sword: [Shiites mourn the martyrdom of Imam Husayn during the month of Moharram] at a gathering of ulema, clergymen, Friday imams and preachers from Tehran. Stressing that all devotees of the martyrs of Karbala [Imam Husayn and his companions were killed in Karbala] should make the most of the sacred light emanating from the event of 'Ashura [10th day of Moharram, anniversary of Imam Hoseyn's death], he called on all clergymen to perform their duties in the best possible way during the holy month of Moharram.

The president also compared the responsibility of clergy before and after the revolution, and, speaking of their current grave responsibilities, he said: Today, circumstances are different. We are now in charge of the country, and we are responsible for the people's affairs in various fields.

The president also spoke of the country's mineral resources and its dedicated manpower, and stressed the need for officials to strive to provide a pleasant life for every single member of the nation. He said: As Muslims, and in keeping with the commands of true Islam, we are duty-bound to transfer to future generations the successful experience of the Islamic revolution and the running of the country.

The president stressed that the country's oil revenues must be devoted to infrastructural projects and to planning for the people of the future. He said: We distribute 1.27 million barrels of oil and 50 million cubic meters of gas per day among the people, the annual value of which is over $10 billion. Not only does the expenditure of this huge sum not contribute anything to the treasury and public property, but we also spend additional huge amounts to freely distribute this wealth among the people. Other governments benefit from this kind of resource for the construction of their countries. This wealth also belongs to future generations and, unfortunately, the wealthy reap more benefit from it and the deprived less. Of course, after the victory of the Islamic revolution, society benefited from many blessings, and many services were brought to villages. Discrimination between the deprived and the wealthy has been removed to some extent in comparison with the previous regime.

Dealing with enemy aggression, foiling conspiracies, and uprooting Taghut and Taghutis [an idol in Mecca—reference to the shah and his supporters] were themselves important tasks, but there are still many tasks ahead of us which we must undertake through the efforts of all the people, especially the clergy, in order that the country's cultural and economic foundation become Islamic from the root.

The president added: The government is trying to increase the gross national product, which is a measure of a society's poverty or wealth. This task requires great work and effort. [passage omitted]

*Mahdavi-Kani Calls Attention to Factionalism

91AS1083D London KEYHAN in Persian 20 Jun 91 p 12

[Text] Political observers have taken Ayatollah Mahdavi-Kani's reentry into the political arena to be a matter of significance. Ayatollah Mahdavi-Kani, apparently due to illness, withdrew from public life a year ago. On the anniversary of Khomeyni's death he gave a speech that

had some interesting points. Continuing as secretary of Tehran Militant Clergy Association, he still occasionally goes to London for a few weeks, to obtain medical treatment. In his talk, he showed implicitly that the factional dispute is about to explode and it is possible that the government will be taken entirely out of the hands of the clergy.

Ayatollah Mahdavi-Kani said that the current condition of the society is not suitable for personal or group attacks. "Our tossing ship has not yet reached port. In circumstances such as those in which we find ourselves, is it in our interest to fight internally among ourselves?"

Political observers view it as astonishing that the Islamic government should be compared to a "tossing ship," and by a conservative and cautious man such as Ayatollah Mahdavi-Kani, and especially since his remarks did not conform in any way with the image of the regime's "stability" conveyed by 'Ali Khamene'i. According to these observers, Ayatollah Mahdavi-Kani was warning the regime's leaders, saying, is the current difficult situation not bad enough without them adding "internal war" to it?

Those closer to Ayatollah Mahdavi-Kani say that he is not one to speak freely and say whatever is on his mind. He weighs his words carefully and then speaks. They also believe that although Ayatollah Mahdavi-Kani is not that happy with the methods of the leaders of the Islamic Republic, this should not be interpreted as opposition to the principle of clerical rule.

Apart from this, what is interesting in his talk is his praise of Ahmad Khomeyni, who, according to him, supports "without reservation the path of the Imam, the position of the leadership, and the government." However, he himself says nothing either of the necessity to "obey the leader" or the necessity of "supporting the government," or even Khamene'i and Rafsanjani.

*Azari-Qomi on Heeding Khomeyni's Instructions

91AS1083A London KEYHAN in Persian
30 May 91 p 1

[Text] Azari-Qomi, a prominent clergyman, a man of influence in the Islamic regime and the proprietor of the newspaper RESALAT, said that when Khomeyni gave guidance during his lifetime to the regime's officials and they did not comply, they were not blamed for it, because there are two kinds of guidance from the leader as jurisconsult: obligatory guidance and advisory guidance.

Azari-Qomi said: Under religious law and according to reason, failure to obey an order from a master who must be obeyed, God, the Prophet, the imam and vali-ye faqih [religious ruler], when the order is issued as an obligatory command by the master, is subject to prosecution and punishment. Advisory guidance, on the other hand, which is mainly guidance, need not necessarily be followed. Not heeding it, for example because it is not implementable, is not a crime and does not require punishment.

Azari-Qomi then discussed instances where Khomeyni issued clear orders and the officials did not implement them, and were not blamed for it. He cited the following examples:
1. The imam ordered in the year 1358 [21 March 1979-20 March 1980] at the Fayziyeh Seminary in Qom that a ministry of "enjoining good and prohibiting evil" should be formed, and it was not.
2. He ordered that oppressed people should be given free water and electricity, which did not occur.
3. He ordered that every Iranian family must have a residential unit, which did not occur.
4. Israel must be destroyed.
5. The highest radio and television officials must be appointed by officials in the three branches of government, which was not practical.
6. Radio broadcasts of pre-agenda speeches (in the Majles) should be cut off if the speeches are in violation of the Constitution, which did not occur.
7. He told the government of Engineer Musavi that commerce, industry and agriculture should be in the hands of the public, which did not occur.
8. He gave secret orders to many of these very Majles deputies, which were not practical. We must either discuss them and say that they took it upon themselves to treat the orders of the imam as advisory guidance, or say that this was opposition to the imam.

Azari-Qomi said: This division of commands into two categories is not exclusive to the late imam. It applies to all leaders.

He expressed regret that "in a country founded on the principles and jurisprudence of Shi'ism, deputies who are clergy or not, and claim to accept velayat-e faqih [rule of religious jurisconsult] and the imam's line do not know about the meaning of obligatory and advisory guidance, which is one of our expicit principles in jurisprudence, and that they are quibbling about a seminary student who studies velayat-e faqih, which has been repeatedly approved by the leader of revolution.

Habibi Discusses Foreign, Domestic Issues

LD1507121691 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian
0930 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] First Vice President Habibi announced in a news conference today that the security of the region cannot possibly be safeguarded without Iran's presence. The Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman constitute a single chain and the responsibility for safeguarding the security of the southern waters of this region cannot be given to the southern littoral states, and of the northern waters to Iran. The government spokesman added: Our point is

not whether the others should or should not be present, but rather the need for Iran's presence in safeguarding the security of the region.

On the German procrastination in completing the Bushehr nuclear power station, Mr. Habibi said: We hold a valid contract with Germany on the construction of the Bushehr power station, and on the basis of international regulations, Germany is dutybound to carry out its obligations. We see no reason why it should not be implemented. We will pursue this matter intensely and practical international guarantees will have to be enforced if Germany refuses to implement it.

In reply to a question on the number of Iraqi refugees in Iranian territory, the first vice president said: The government's policy is based on returning these dear ones to their homes, and so far over one million of them have been repatriated, leaving less than 500,000 in Iran.

On the reasons for the Central Bank's delay in allocating foreign exchange credits to industrial units, the government spokesman said: The government has no difficulty in balancing its payments, and at present, due to transport problems in the country, and the shortage of storage space in ports, it was considered expedient to slow down the trend of foreign exchange allocation.

On the cabinet proposals adopted during its last two sessions, Mr. Habibi said: In the 19 Tir [10 July] session we were presented with a report on the reconstruction of Abadan, the focal point of which was the revival of Abadan's palm groves. If successful, our export of dates in the future will overtake that of our pistachios. He added: In the 23 Tir [14 July] session, also, the amended proposal by the Ministry of Education and Training on the allocation of land to institutions and non-profit making schools was debated. The proposal by the Heavy Industries Ministry on ways of importing all kinds of buses, trucks, minibuses, vans, and construction machinery without foreign exchange restrictions was also debated. Mr. Habibi said: Also in that session, the construction of sports facilities next to factories, as proposed by the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry and the Physical Education Organization, was debated and approved. Mr. Habibi added: The report by the Health, Treatment, and Medical Education Ministry on the country's population structure and the success rate of the family planning project was also debated. In connection with this, the necessary decision was adopted.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the first vice president referred to the issue that the burden of price increases is more on the shoulders of fixed salary employees. He said: In view of the present state of prices, fixed salary employees will certainly lose out. For that reason we have adopted a plan on the basis of which no losses will be incurred by the vulnerable strata.

On the allocation of 33 percent of factory shares to the employees, Mr. Habibi said: Regulations are being formulated on the basis of which the employees will be able to purchase 33 percent of factory shares, with regard to which the allocation of shares in 400 factories have been considered.

On Relations With France

LD1507200191 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1701 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Excerpts] Dear listeners, just as you were informed in the news bulletin, Mr. Habibi, first vice president and Cabinet spokesman, reported today at a news conference on important governmental and regional issues and the Cabinet decisions of the past week. We draw your attention to this interview. Good-evening and God bless.

[Begin Habibi recording] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Good day to friends. [passage omitted] I will begin this week's interview. First, as usual, I will report on two cabinet sessions and, God willing, I will reply to your questions. [passage omitted]

As to the Bushehr nuclear power station, as I mentioned two meetings ago I believe, we have a valid contract with Germany based on international principles. We have the same expectations that these same countries, i.e. European countries in general have, namely, that international regulations should be observed and laws and contracts should be respected. In the past, they used to accuse us, every now and then, of not observing international regulations. What we are merely insisting on now is that international regulations concerning valid international contracts should be observed and carried out. This is an issue between us and our friends in Germany. Now that our relations, both from the political and economic standpoint, are normalized, there is no reason why this contract should not be carried out. In any case, the Germans also have a parliament which has approved a measure which calls for precision and care regarding nuclear issues—and even domestically, they want to observe these concerns. In any case, we insist that this contract be implemented. If it is not, then these international guarantees, these international guarantees regarding implementation should definitely come into force. Otherwise the issue will take another course—that is, it will be seen that European countries which believe that international regulations should prevail in the world only want this so long as it can be made to serve their own interests. This is what we will say if the issue takes another course. However, it will definitely not do so; and we will defend our right.

About Dr. Velayati's talks in France, there was no question of a pressure group or such like. But resolving the dispute that existed between Iran and France for 10 years or more will take some time and there are various points to be smoothed out. In our talks with the French it was agreed some time ago that the dispute should be resolved politically. That is, we said a political decision should be taken about the issue so that it can be solved. Otherwise, if approached from the economic and legal angle, the issue would have been discussed and been

under scrutiny in courtrooms for years. On the basis of that political decision the matter has been resolved.

It was said here and there that we want to obtain enriched uranium. We never intended to. It is a small point in the solution to this problem which should have been decided on, and that has been resolved. But since the agreement—that is the resolving of the disputes—has not been signed, we will leave this point until the issue is resolved, then we will talk about it. Nevertheless, it is not as some newspapers have stated in Europe, that Iran wanted to obtain enriched uranium; no, it was not like that. Of course, since there is talk of disarmament and nuclear arms control and such these days, naturally, world newspapers and press mention Iran's name too to muddy the water. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Report on Presence of U.S. Vessels in Gulf Denied

LD1507111791 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] The presence, in the coastal waters of the Islamic Republic of Iran, of minesweepers belonging to countries confronting Iraq has been denied. An informed official from the secretariat of the Supreme National Security Council, contacting IRNA, denied the UPI report on the presence of U.S. and Japanese minesweepers, describing it as incorrect and untrue.

In a report published on Saturday night, UPI quoted officers from the coalition forces as saying that the forces of countries which assisted in minesweeping operations in the Persian Gulf have already returned home, whereas the U.S. and Japanese vessels, under the protection of combat vessels of the coalition forces, are still engaged in minesweeping operations in Iraqi and Iranian waters.

Report on Merger of Law Enforcement Agencies

NC1507180491 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0630 GMT 13 Jul 91

["Order, Security, and the People" from the "Law Enforcement Forces" program]

[Excerpt] As we said in a previous program, various political, social, and law enforcement factors are responsible for the approval and implementation of the plan to merge the various law enforcement agencies. We have also discussed that law enforcement duties were shared among the agencies as a result of various problems. This delegation of authority, however, did not eliminate the present difficulties, and it spawned other problems which manifested themselves in the insensitivity in the law enforcement agencies towards the rest of society. In a single and reorganized law enforcement agency, all the elements and agencies should be sensitive to those cases and points which could damage the system's prestige and the security of society. Undoubtedly, this attention, favor, and sensitivity could not be instilled in all the law enforcement agencies and their commanders except unless these agencies were reorganized and unified.

Economically, the old system put an enormous drain on the nation's budget. In the past, the expenditure for law enforcement amounted to 250 billion rials annually. Obviously, merging the agencies will ensure greater feedback of this nascent agency in carrying out its duties and assignments.

This cannot be attained unless two things transpire: First, all the agencies' personnel must work with one another regardless of their former organizational affiliation; and second, the people must support the new agency. This support and encouragement will be the most important part of the plan.

Obviously if these two basic conditions are fulfilled, the success of the new agency will be certain and inevitable. [passage omitted]

Secret Contact With Bosnia President Alleged

TA1507084791 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 0330 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] We have learned that the Islamic Republic regime has for some time now maintained secret contact with Alija Izetbegovic, president of Bosnia-Hercegovina, one of the Yugoslav republics, and is providing him with financial assistance. Alija Izetbegovic is a fundamentalist Muslim and a member of the Feda'iyan-e Eslam organization. He had previously been arrested and tried for his activities in that organization and had spent some time in prison.

West Behind Tunis-Cairo Anti-Islam Pact

LD1407171691 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0951 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Station commentary: "Campaign Against Islam"]

[Excerpts] The trend in confrontation with Islam in the Middle East and the Mediterranean basin is assuming a more serious and revealing form as the days go by. The latest development in that field is the signing by Egypt and Tunisia of a security pact to campaign against the dangers of Islamic fundamentalist currents.

According to the pact, the Egyptian and Tunisian regimes will train the necessary manpower to campaign against Islamicists. They will cooperate in intelligence exchanges and in developing ways to suppress all sabotage and destabilizing acts which threaten the security of the two countries. [passage omitted]

In these countries, ground exists for political forces having Islamic convictions to be active and for their activities to develop as strong factors. Now that Islamic activities are increasing, we see that neutralization of these factors and, at a minimum, the arrest of the growth of the Islamic resurgence have priority.

Political experts believe the security pact signed between Tunis and Cairo falls within the framework of an overall regional and international plan. This is because operations to confront Islamic forces, within a domestic sphere, are being launched in Egypt and Tunisia and in most of the countries which face the same problems. Thus, it is possible that similar cooperation will be signed by all Arab countries.

According to expert opinion, since the past methods and policies of the Western countries have failed to suppress the Islamic uprising, they have now been prompted to entrust the task to the regimes who themselves face a bigger threat from revolutionary Muslims. These countries are to act as a lever for confrontation.

According to the new thinking, it seems that Egypt has taken on the important pivotal role in this field, because Cairo has the necessary resources and long experience in this field and thus its activities can be more effective than the activities of other regimes. Therefore, the West has not only provided vast financial help to Egypt, but it has also written off most of Cairo's 50 billion dollar debt. This will give the Cairo authorities the means to cope with grave economic problems at home and to play a more active role in eradicating any fertile ground in other countries for the growth of Islamicism. [passage omitted]

Of course, Western countries do not limit their activities to economic aid. Recent political moves have been initiated to hold a conference in which the Arab Maghreb countries will sit with such European countries as France, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, under the title of four plus five. The aim is to arrive at agreements to fight Islam in that part of Africa. Some circles even believe that the visit of Francois Mitterrand to Tunisia several days ago was not far removed from such moves. [passage omitted]

Commentary Views U.S. Aims in Mideast Region

LD1507214491 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1830 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Station commentary: "The Possibility of the U.S. Attack Against Iraq"]

[Excerpts] American threats against Iraq based on bombing that country's nuclear installations on the eve of the summit of the seven industrial countries in London, have attracted the attention of political circles. The American President George Bush's sharp remarks in this connection and the statements made by French and British officials have greatly raised the possibility of an air strike against the Iraqi nuclear installations. [passage omitted]

Political circles believe that the new American threats against Iraq should be reviewed in line with the U.S. policy toward Iraq especially after the enforcement of the cease-fire in the Persian Gulf war.

Certain other circles say that these threats and the likely military offensive are to complete those policies. It also seems that the issue could be another dimension of the American policy of disarming the Middle East. The U.S. President wants to change the balance of power in the region in favor of Israel by taking advantage of the Security Council resolutions and the military lever. The recent statement by the American secretary of defense that Israel is a strategic ally of the United States in the region is indicative of the fact that the policy in question is no longer a secret. Therefore, the U.S. military offensive against Iraq under the pretext that Iraq is going to enjoy nuclear facilities is a policy which can cover the whole region. In this connection, the American sensitivity over Pakistan's nuclear potentials is another example to cite.

In this connection, it is important to note that the dual American policy, on the one hand, and its sensitivity over certain regional countries' nuclear potentials, on the other, does not care about the implementation of the Security Councils' resolutions regarding Israel. Therefore, in view of the United States performance in the Middle East after the Persian Gulf war and the current situation in Arab countries, it is believed that the United States will fail to get the:e countries' agreement in implementing its plans in the region.

U.S.-Style Disarmament Viewed as 'Sick Joke'

LD1407115191 Tehran IRNA in English 1022 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] Tehran, 14 July IRNA—An Iranian daily Sunday described the American style disarmament as "a grand scheme to keep the whole of Asia subject to Western leadership—with the exception of Israel."

The English daily KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL further said in its editorial that the goal of the U.S. style disarmament is not to secure peace but "long term domination based, of all things, in selective military might."

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Friday termed attempts to disarm the Middle East as ill-intentions of the global arrogance.

Expressing suprise over Washington's stance against arms proliferation, it said that the U.S. does not intend to disarm otherwise. Like charity disarmament must begin at home.

The editorial questioned who was responsible for the unstable situation in the Middle East during the current century, saying "Is that the fault of Imam Khomeyni or is it the insidious hands of British and French colonial policy and America's post war neocolonial role."

The U.S. version of disarmament is aimed at making Muslim and Third World countries, as well as the Soviet Union unable to defend themselves military and culturally.

As for China, the paper said "It's okay for the big boys of the American defense industries to pillage Saudi Arabian and Kuwaiti coffers in exchange for military muscle that turns to water in a pinch but patently forbidden for the Chinese to sell its military hardware to Syria and Pakistan. What logic is this considering that American arms are the stumbling block in achieving, among other noble things, Korean unity?"

The daily concluded by terming the American style disarmament as a "sick joke".

Paper Deplores Lack of Propaganda Facilities

NC1307065291 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 3 Jul 91 p 4

[Commentary by IRNA's Bushehr correspondent]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] The pure Islam of Mohammad (peace be upon him), which is our country's main cultural tenet and draws inspiration from divine injunctions, has been subjected to various onslaughts in the form of rumors, newspapers, publications, and radio and television programs by the forces of global arrogance.

Experience has shown, however, that if the propaganda disseminated by the forces of global arrogance manages to come in contact with the intelligence and vigilance of our Muslim people and our officials, it will be ineffective, because the Iranian nation is Muslim and is endowed with a rich Islamic culture. This divine characteristic helps to counteract the propaganda of global arrogance.

If the officials are ignorant of this fact, and do not attach the same importance to the propaganda of others and of the enemies of the Islamic Revolution—particularly of the forces of global arrogance—and display an indifference to the issue on behalf of the Muslim people, the foreigners' propaganda will definitedly infiltrate the minds of the ignorant and utterly unaware people. This would in itself be harmful, and in fact would also affect those who are aware and dedicated (who are labelled fundamentalists in the propaganda of global arrogance). [passage omitted]

Even though the forces of global arrogance pursue many objectives with such propaganda, there are two basic and important points which should be mentioned:
1. The establishment of a huge propaganda dam to block the culture of the pure Mohammadan-style Islam from reaching the Muslim people of the Persian Gulf, who follow this culture, are thirsting for it, and are enamored with it.
2. The effort spread the culture of Westernization in the minds of the Muslims in the densely populated coastal provinces of Iran.

Our enemies are attaching great importance to such propaganda efforts and are investing in them. In an attempt to lure the people toward their culture, they keep using their loudspeakers to disseminate claims that the people do not believe in and which are in fact very strange and painful for them. What have we done for these people, who are pious and devoted and thirsting for the culture of the pure Islam of Mohammad (peace be upon him)?

This question may primarily concern the people in the central areas; however, the main point of this argument is directed toward the people and the propaganda apparatus in Bushehr Province, which has a sensitive and strategic position. With correct planning, it can keep the lowly Eastern and Western culture from seeping into the country and can foster Islamic culture in the Persian Gulf.

If we say that the propaganda establishment in Bushehr Province is below zero, or even at zero level, it would not be an exaggeration. The Islamic Guidance Ministry which is in charge of propaganda in Bushehr Province is not at all useful, and only the central province has an organization for Culture and Islamic Guidance. In other parts of the province, this department's activity is limited to 24 ordinary libraries, which in real terms means that, due to a lack of resources, is limited to just a few libraries which are of any value.

Even in Central Province, this organization's activity is not very dazzling and is constantly criticized. In Bushehr, the criticism is that the department's activity is limited to a few films, plays, and photography and painting exhibitions.

The Islamic Propaganda Organization [IPO], which is also in charge of some of the propaganda, is no exception, and its officials' activity is limited to staging miscellaneous annual functions such as the Ten Days of Dawn, some recitation contests, and some elementary classes on the Koran. They seem content with convening a few functions on various days of the year and are completely oblivious to the foreigners' plots.

The Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran center in Bushehr Province, which became operational two years ago, has been content with carrying only a 15-minute newscast a day and replays of its Friday programs—and we seem quite satisfied. If only these programs were carried regularly, the people could benefit to some extent. Even these programs are plagued with difficulties, because there are not enough resources to enable them to be viewed over the entire province. The people are therefore prompted to watch foreign television programs and those relayed by Persian Gulf countries. These programs have had a very undesirable effect on society, for example, on wedding rituals, recreation centers, and young people's behavior toward one another in the province.

Therefore, whenever the executive officials of Bushehr Province are asked why propaganda in the province is in such a state, they gripe about the lack of resources and funding, the shortage of manpower, the lack of authority

to recruit personnel and so on. In reality, however, we cannot completely blame these factors.

We hope that the officials in charge of propaganda in the country and in Bushehr Province, which is in an especially sensitive position, will pay greater attention to the situation. We also hope the esteemed officials in charge of propaganda and cultural affairs in the province will review their beliefs and make the necessary changes in management, thus taking effective steps to improve the propaganda situation and the dissemination of the rich Islamic culture on the provincial level.

*New Paper Published by Khamene'i's Brother

91AS1083c London KEYHAN in Persian 13 Jun 91 p 12

[Text] The second family problem is emerging for 'Ali Khamene'i, the leader of the Islamic Republic. After Sheykh 'Ali Tehrani, Khamene'i's brother-in-law, got into a conflict with Ruhollah Khomeyni and fled for fear of his life to Baghdad and took up residence there, now Hadi Khamene'i, his younger brother who is the Majles deputy from Mashhad, is preparing to publish a newspaper called JAHAN-E ESLAM. It is said in Tehran that JAHAN-E ESLAM will join two other publications, BAYAN and SALAM, in opposing the policies of Rafsanjani's government, because Hadi Khamene'i belongs to the faction in the Majles opposing the government. His brother Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i has quite openly supported Rafsanjani and has characterized opposition to him as contrary to the aspirations of the Islamic revolution and opposition to the interest of the Islamic regime.

It is rumored in Tehran that government leaders want to prevent the publication of BAYAN and SALAM, but they have not yet agreed on the question on who will tie the bell around the cat's neck. All the problems that have developed in the publication of the monthly BAYAN suggest that pressure is being brought to bear through various channels on the government's internal opponents.

The monthly BAYAN is printed at KEYHAN's fully equipped printing house, but Mohammad Khatami, the minister of Islamic culture & guidance, who is the KEYHAN's chief supervisor, has not yet agreed to prevent this monthly from being printed at KEYHAN's printing house.

Clandestine Radio Reports Peshmerga Clash, Deaths

NC1507091791 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 14 Jul 91

[Text] According to a report from the Democratic Party of Kordestan's committee in Robat District, a group of the Zendiran force's peshmerga were travelling to the Jabarand village in Kaleshin in Robat on a party assignment on the evening of 10 July. After they finished their preliminary surveillance activities, the peshmerga entered a house and were fired upon. The peshmerga opened fire in retaliation and the exchange continued for 20 minutes.

Three of the combatant peshmerga, three loyal offspring of the Kordish nation, were martyred during the incident. The names of these illustrious and unforgettable martyrs are:

1. Martyr Jamal Mohammadi, also known as Jamal Qamishle'i, resident of Qamishleh village in the Meydanshah District of Robat. He was a regime soldiers and had forged links with the party. In 1988, he joined the peshmerga's Jarak force, was transferred to the Zendiran force, and, after completing a preliminary course at the party's politico-military training academy in 1990, returned to the Zendiran force and continued his divine mission. He played a brilliant role in the peshmerga's Robat operations and was actively involved in routing the Sardasht Gendarmerie's task force and the so-called Miraveh task force and in occupying Ba'iskolah and Chomal bases.

2. Martyr Mostafa Fatehi, also known as Mostafa Kavlani, resident of Kavlan village in Mahabad. Last year he joined the peshmerga's ranks, and, following the peshmerga's preliminary course at the party's political-military academy, was assigned to the Zendiran force. In this short time, martyr Mostafa was highly praised by his colleagues.

3. Martyr Abu-Bakr Shahidiyan, also known as Abu-Bakr Qalarashi, resident of Qalarasheh village in Sardasht. Martyr Abu-Bakr was a combatant who pledged to join the peshmerga last year and in the end gave up his life for his own people.

The Voice of Iranian Kordestan and the Party Committee of Robat District shower thousands of blessings on the pure souls of the martyrs Jamal, Mostafa, and Abu-Bakr and convey condolences to their families, their colleagues in the trenches, the residents of Qamisheh, Kavlan, and Qalarasheh, and the people of Kordestan. We join them in their sorrow and sadness. May the enemies of freedom suffer annihilation and disgrace!

Nepal & Bhutan

Police Arrest Over 2,000 Protesting Civil Workers

BK1607002491 Hong Kong AFP in English 1914 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Kathmandu, July 15 (AFP)—More than 2,000 of Nepal's civil servants gave themselves up for arrest Monday, defying government warnings to end their two-week-old campaign for better pay and benefits, an official source said.

Others joined a five-hour pen-down strike that affected the Auditor General's Office, Attorney General's

Office, the Supreme Court, the Central Regional Court, the Postal Department and some offices outside Kathmandu.

The civil servants volunteered for arrest after police picked up two truckloads of their picketing colleagues at the Kathmandu chief district office and 37 others at the Home Ministry, including Nepal Civil Servants' Organization (NCSO) Chairman Prem Dangal, witnesses said.

The leftwing NCSO, which is leading the campaign for higer wages as well as transport, housing and educational facilities for lower-income civil servants, has called for a six-hour pen-down strike Tuesday, despite laws barring civil servants from striking.

The government did not officially confirm the number of voluntary court arrests, saying only that "the government's decision to take stringent action has been fully enforced within and outside Kathmandu."

Three other civil servants were arrested as they distributed leaflets at the House of Representatives calling for disciplinary action against an MP, Gambhir Jung Karki, who had described the protestors Sunday as "let-out buffalos."

"We will continue our fight until our demands are fulfilled, no matter what happens to us. Even if all the 150,000 civil servants are arrested or dismissed," said NSCO activist Durga Bahadur Adhikari.

Mr. Adhikari complained that though the civil servants played "a very important role" in restoring multiparty democracy in Nepal last year, "the elected democratic government does listen to us."

The six-week-old cash-strapped administration of Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala has refused to negotiate with the NSCO, saying it is awaiting the recommendations of a pay commission which has yet to be constituted.

R. K. Pandey, a veteran politician, compared the campaign to a movement launched by lower-income civil servants in 1955 which led to the downfall of a government headed by Mr. Koirala's eldest brother. He urged the government to negotiate with the NCSO.

Pakistan

Reportage on Blast in Train Compartment

Five Killed

BK1507153391 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Five persons were killed and several others injured by a bomb blast in a compartment of a Faisalabad-bound passenger train near Shekhupura this afternoon. Punjab Chief Minister Ghulam Hayder Wyne has expressed deep grief and concern over the blast and expressed his sympathy to those affected.

Government Tries To Curb Lawlessness

BK1507154091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1519 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Lahore, Pakistan, July 15 (AFP)—A train blast killed at least seven people and injured 25 Monday, as the government finalized plans to acquire extraordinary powers to curb crime and lawlessness in Pakistan.

Witnesses and police said the explosion occurred in the last car of the train which was on its way from here to Faisalabad in the Province of Punjab. State-run television reported four people were dead and 15 injured.

This third blast in 25 days in the province, currently witnessing Moslem sectarian tensions during the Shiite rituals in Moharram, the first month of Islamic calender, marked a further deterioration in law and order.

Police said they had no immediate idea who engineered the blast, but previously officials have blamed what they called Indian-backed saboteurs for sabotage in Pakistan.

It was also not clear whether the incident had any relation to the sectarian trouble in Faisalabad and its surrounds following the murder of Maulana Mohammad Yusuf, a prominent figure in the anti- Shiite Anjuman Sipah-e-Sahaba (ASS), by unidentified assailants at Faisalabad on Saturday.

Railway sources here said a train, rushed to the site of the explosion, was ferrying the injured to Faisalabad.

A passenger bus explosion in the suburbs of Lahore, capital of Punjab, left 10 people injured last Thursday, and a train blast June 20 at Wazirabad left people dead and 42 injured.

Reports Monday said the government was to ask the parliament in the coming days to give it extraordinary powers to deal with crimes in designated areas.

A constitutional amendment bill is to be moved in the 217-member National Assembly to enable the government to take whatever measures it considers necessary.

The courts will be barred from entertaining any challenge to action in areas declared as affected by terrorism or other heinous crimes, the reports said quoting ruling Islamic Democratic Alliance sources.

The details of the draft have not been officially revealed, but Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, an aide to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, said the aim was to punish criminals quickly.

In Islamabad, Interior Minister Chaudhry Shujat Hussain told the National Assembly Monday the prime minister had reconstituted a security committee dealing with national security and law and order matters.

Official ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN (APP) quoted him as saying the government was considering fresh enactments to tackle the situation.

Four new ordinances designed to improve law and order may be issued, the minister said, adding that the provinces had been asked to set up special courts for the trial of criminals under an existing suppression of terrorism act.

The minister, in a separate statement in the Senate, said the government had prepared a plan for beefing up security in the federal capital.

Speaking in the Senate, Professor Khurshid Ahmed, vice-president of fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami, said crime had increased in Islamabad.

Commander Urges Islamic Support for Kashmiris

BK1507143791 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1400 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Iran has called upon the Islamic world to wholeheartedly support the Kashmiri people so as to enable them to secure their right of self-determination. The demand was made by Major General Mohsen Reza'i, chief commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, while addressing a function in Muzaffarabad today.

Azad Jammu and Kashmir President Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan speaking on this occasion made a special reference to the ongoing struggle in the occupied Kashmir and spoke in detail on the independence movement in Kashmir. He urged the Islamic world to exert pressure on India to settle the Kashmir issue in accordance with the UN resolutions.

U.S. Objection to PRC Missile Sales Criticized

BK1507145591 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 5 Jul 91 p 6

[Editorial: "US Arrogance and China"]

[Text] Now it is China against which the mighty United States will consider imposing sanctions over its missile sales to Pakistan. The State Department says it is trying to determine if the sale is a breach of an international pact. The only catch is, China is by no means a signatory to any such pact! The mere fact of China not being a signatory to the pact does not, of course, prevent the US from imposing its threatened sanctions because it is the same old story of the wolf and the lamb though it is a moot point whether China falls in the latter category. China has admitted selling M-11 missiles to Pakistan but says they have a range of less than 200 kilometres, a claim disputed by the United States which apparently thinks these missiles can carry a 500 kilogram warhead more than 500 kilometres. For the past many years, the US has believed only what it thinks and it is an even bet that the Chinese claim will eventually end up as unaccepted.

It was an early Maoist claim that China was not a superpower but it was a Third World country and this claim holds true even today. As a member of the Third World family, China has always stood up in defence of Third World countries. It sided with North Korea, with Vietnam and then with Pakistan at various stages of time. China stood staunchly by the North Koreans and the Vietnamese against American aggression on their soil and it was in the forefront of the countries which condemned Russian intervention in Afghanistan, fully supporting Pakistan's stand on the issue. Now, its sale of missiles to Pakistan has stirred what could be a major hornets nest in the United States. True to character, after having had their will in the Middle East, the Americans are looking for other areas to browbeat and China seems to be the most likely target.

All this makes one wonder whether China will persist in the zeal and pioneering spirit it has shown all along in respect of peace and justice on a global level in general and in the Third World in particular. American global designs seem transparent enough. Having pushed communism almost into the background of history, their only other fears have been of the Muslims and the Chinese. Obviously, they will not sit back and relax until they have ensured that these powers are left with no teeth. It is a matter of no small interest in the Third World whether China will continue to stand up to the international bully or allow its future stance to be dictated by other considerations.

Sharif Authorized To Present Charter Amendment

BK1507120191 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] The IJI [Islami Jamhoori Ittehad] parliamentary party and supporting groups today unanimously authorized the prime minister to move a constitutional amendment bill in the National Assembly to empower the government to deal effectively with terrorist activities and law and order situation. Addressing the parliamentary party meeting, Mr. Nawaz Sharif said the constitutional amendment will have far-reaching positive effects and he has decided to take the opposition into confidence. For this purpose, he along with senior parliamentarians would meet opposition leaders to take them into confidence on the amendment despite the fact that the IJI has absolute majority in parliament.

The prime minister said the IJI wanted to bring about economic revolution in the country. But certain elements were out to sabotage this process. He urged the masses to be prepared to deal with antipeople and antistate elements, who at the instance of certain foreign powers, are engaged in fomenting trouble in the country to divert attention from their own internal problems. He also spoke of government's plan to train police force and provide it modern equipment to deal with the new crime wave.

Official Warns Against Damaging Nuclear Plant

BK1507110591 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 13 Jul 91 p 10

[Excerpts] Rawalpindi, July 12—Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, Adviser to Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting, said here today that Pir Pagara should work for welfare of the country by doing practical and solid work.

He was talking to an eight-member delegation of Mirpur Khas Press Club.

Sheikh Rashid said, though two sons of Pir Pagara were Ministers, he had strangely enough begun criticising the Government. [passage omitted]

Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said that the Government would solve the problems of the people and build a strong economy. He said that the strong economy helped adopt an independent foreign policy.

Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said the failure to attain self reliance would "compel us to accept the new world order of the United States."

Sheikh Rashid Ahmed advised the people to remain vigilant against anti-State elements. He said people had always rendered great sacrifices for the glory of the nation.

Sheikh Rashid Ahmed strongly condemned the terrorist activities of anti-State elements. He said that the bomb blasts and the murder of innocent people had evil motives. He said the elements doing this did not want Pakistan to live with honour and dignity in the comity of nations.

He said since Pakistan had a strategic position in the region and some elements were striving to weaken it through disruption, uncertainty and tension. He was confident that the patriotic people would never let such elements attain their nefarious objectives.

The Adviser to the Prime Minister warned against any attempt to damage the Kahuta Plant. He said Pakistan was fully capable to hit back the enemy. He said if Kahuta was in danger [India's] Tarapur could not remain safe.

He said Pakistan desired cordial relations with India but for this the solution of Kashmir problem was essential. He was confident that the brave people of Kashmir would win independence. He said the people should be on guard against traitors during Muharram. They might indulge in nefarious activities and thus cause sectarian disturbance.

He said the people know neither Sunnis nor Shias could do any thing which could harm Pakistan. It were the enemies of nation who set ablaze sectarian differences.

Sri Lanka

Navy Joins Offense To End LTTE Siege of Camp

BK1507120491 Hong Kong AFP in English 1008 GMT 15 Jul 91

[Text] Colombo July 15 (AFP)—The Sri Lankan Navy has joined a major military offensive to end a Tamil guerrilla siege of a key army camp in northern Sri Lanka amid mounting casualties on both sides, officials here said Monday.

Military officials said seaborne troops landed on a beach close to the besieged Elephant Pass camp as naval gunboats shelled positions of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) along the coast.

"Our troops have now established a beachhead at Vetilaikkeni," a military spokesman here said, referring to the amphibious landing by elite army commandos some eight kilometers (five miles) east of Elephant Pass amid rebel fire. He said the seaborne troops had secured the beachhead to carry out a ground offensive as aircraft were unable to land inside the besieged camp to help trapped soldiers and evacuate dozens of wounded troops.

The military spokesman would not say how many commandos were involved in the operation but the state-run daily observer newspaper said the navy had ferried about 1,000 troops to reinforce the soldiers at Elephant Pass.

The spokesman said the navy waded into the offensive after LTTE guerrillas made another massive bid Sunday to overrun the strategic camp lying at the entrance to the tiger-controlled Jaffna Peninsula.

Since fierce fighting began on Wednesday, the soldiers at Elephant Pass have been receiving air support but the rebels have repeatedly hit back after being beaten off time and again by intense aerial strikes.

"The soldiers are now consolidating their positions at Vetilaikkeni. Their presence has eased the pressure for our men at Elephant Pass," the spokesman said, adding the move could also be used as a diversionary tactic.

"We were prepared for an attack on Elephant Pass. But we didn't expect problems in landing helicopters inside the camp," a senior military officer here said.

The officer said the Tigers had either acquired new anti-aircraft weapons or were using heavy machine guns perched at a high elevation, making it dangerous for an aircraft to get below 1,515 meters (5,000 feet).

The military here listed army losses at 16 dead and 73 wounded and said security forces recovered 59 bodies of guerrillas with their weapons just outside the Elephant Pass camp after the latest failed rebel thrust Sunday.

The island's entire north remained under an indefinite curfew imposed on Wednesday but the military is unable to enforce it on the ground because Tigers control large parts of the embattled region.

Barring a handful of army camps, the LTTE is in virtual control of the entire Jaffna Peninsula, the heartland of Tamil separatism in Sri Lanka.

Officials here have described the LTTE assault as the biggest attempt yet to overrun Elephant Pass base, which is on a narrow causeway linking the Jaffna Peninsula with the rest of the country.

There has been no word so far from the LTTE on the fighting at Elephant Pass. The rebels usually release press statements from their offices in Paris and London.

Elephant Pass has come under sporadic rocket and mortar bomb attack since renewed fighting between government troops and LTTE broke out in June last year following the failure of 14 months of peace talks between the two sides.

In other incidents, the LTTE carried out a sporadic mortar bomb attack on the main Palaly air base in Jaffna overnight Sunday but there were no casualties reported, the military spokesman here said.

In Eastern Batticaloa district, LTTE activists ambushed an army patrol killing one soldier, the spokesman said.

Some 7,567 people have died in bitter fighting since the LTTE resumed its campaign to carve out a separate state for the island's two million Tamil minority concentrated in the northeast.

EPDP Leader Demands Blood, Care for Injured

BK1607075291 Hong Kong AFP in English 0735 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] Colombo, July 16 (AFP)—Tamil guerrillas battling government troops near a major army base in northern Sri Lanka have demanded blood from Tamil civilians to treat their wounded cadres, a rival leader said here Tuesday.

Douglas Devananda, leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP), said in a statement that Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas were forcing the people of northern Jaffna peninsula to nurse wounded rebel cadres.

"The blood shed by the people to quench the thirst of bloody fascism, not being sufficient, an order that the people donate blood has been made by the LTTE," said Mr. Devananda, himself a former guerrilla chief.

The EPDP and other rival Tamil groups have frequently slammed the LTTE leadership for continuing its "fascist rule" and causing "untold hardship" on the civilian population of Jaffna.

Military officials said the LTTE's Political Secretary Yogaratnam Yogi had launched a public blood donation campaign in Jaffna for wounded tigers following heavy LTTE casualties in fighting at Elephant Pass since Wednesday.

The fighting has so far killed 27 army troops and some 150 LTTE guerrillas while 95 other soldiers and dozens of militants have also been wounded, according to military estimates.

However, there has been no word from the LTTE on the latest situation in the north, large parts of which are controlled by the Tigers.

Elephant Pass is located at the entrance to the Jaffna Peninsula, which is the main stronghold of the Tigers.

"They have requested that one (person) from each house come forward to nurse the LTTE wounded at least for 10 days," Mr. Devananda said, adding the Tigers have also demanded bed linen to treat the wounded militants.

Mr. Devananda once fought alongside the LTTE for an independent homeland in the Northeast for the island's Tamil minority of two million but later renounced the separatist cause to fight on the government's side.

Dozens of EPDP cadres have been deployed alongside government troops in the battle against LTTE guerrillas.

15 Soldiers Killed in Continued Fighting

BK1607090491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 16 Jul 91

[Text] In Sri Lanka, 15 soldiers and an unspecified number of LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] militants have been killed in the continuing fight between the security forces and the LTTE cadres in the northeast during the last 24 hours. Official sources in Colombo said hundreds of soldiers backed by air cover are fighting their way to smash the seven-day old LTTE seige of the Elephant Pass Camp in the northern province. In Trincomalee District, six soldiers and 22 militants were killed in a fresh offensive by the security forces in the eastern Vellai Oya Province.